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**COMMENTS**

ON THE

**COMMENTATORS ON SHAKESPEAR.**

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CONTINUED

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COMMENTS  
ON  
THE COMMENTATORS  
ON  
*Shakespear.*  
WITH  
PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS  
ON HIS  
GENIUS AND WRITINGS;  
AND ON THE LABORS OF THOSE WHO HAVE ENDEA-  
VOURED TO ELUCIDATE THEM.

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By HENRY JAMES PYE.

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'Ου δοκεῖ ὑμῖν ᾧ φίλοι ὁ μὲν ἔτερος τύτων, τράγον ἀμέλγειν, ὁ δὲ,  
αὐτῷ κόσκινον ὑποτίθεναι.—LUCIAN DEMON.

One meets now and then with persons who are extremely learned and  
knotty in expounding clear cases.—SPEC. No. 138.

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TO  
**JOHN PENN, ESQ.**

OF

**STOKE PARK.**

**THIS LITTLE WORK**

**Is Dedicated**

**AS A TOKEN OF RESPECT, FRIENDSHIP,  
AND GRATITUDE,**

**BY HIS**

**SINCERE AND FAITHFUL**

**HUMBLE SERVANT,**

**HENRY JAMES PYE.**

*Queen-square, Westminster,  
May 4, 1807.*

THE MUSICAL VETO.

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THE VETO.

THE MUSICAL VETO.

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THE MUSICAL VETO.

THESE Observations are made from the  
Edition of Mr. NICHOLS, in Eight Volumes,  
thick 12mo. 1797 ; and which professes to  
be a frugal Selection from the Labors of  
all the Commentators.

the next step was continuing work  
mainly along the coast all summer  
at various locations, some land,  
in coastal and near coastal areas, and  
on the ocean.

SHORT OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE  
GENIUS AND WRITINGS OF SHAKESPEAR ;  
AND THE  
LABORS OF HIS COMMENTATORS.

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AFTER so much that has been written on this subject in the prolegomena to the various editions of Shakespear, and after the two luminous Essays of Mrs. Montague and Mr. Morgan, it is difficult to say any thing new upon the subject. I shall therefore only throw together a few thoughts on it that have occurred to me during my perusal of those works, which, through the course of my life, has been a favourite amusement in my hours of leisure.

Those who consider Shakespear only as a dramatic writer, will form a very incompetent idea

of his merit; for he possesses every species of poetical excellence in a very great degree. Of the contrivance of the fable, and the arrangement of the incidents, which Aristotle calls the soul of the drama, he was very careless, as well as of the unities considered as essential to probability, which are very different from the unities hinted at by Aristotle, and so rigidly adhered to by the French critics. I see no breach of probability in the long period that elapses between the third and fourth Act in *The Winter's Tale*, any more than there would have been on the Athenian stage, where several tragedies were performed in succession, if the *Iphiginia in Taurus* had been acted immediately after the *Iphigenia in Aulis*. The real breach of the unity of time, (with which the unity of place is much connected) is, when the precise time of action is marked, and events are made to take place in that time which could not possibly happen. Of this error the play of *Lear* affords a striking example. In the second Act, Lear comes in with his train to Regan, at Gloucester's castle, after having been recently affronted

by Goneril. From the circumstance of the storm continuing, it is obvious that the interval between the second and third Acts does not comprehend a period of time much exceeding that which really passes, and yet, in this time, we are told that there “is a power already footed to revenge the injuries the king now bears;” and Cornwall says, “the French are now landed.” The same distinction applies to the unity of place. The creative fancy of the poet, without essentially violating poetical probability, may place his hero on a magic courser, that can

‘ Put a girdle round about the earth  
In forty minutes.’

But he must not make an army of men march from Edinburgh to London in one night.

Without having recourse to Shakespear or the Arabian Tales, Euripides will furnish a strong instance of the breach of both these natural unities. In the Suppliants, on which Chaucer’s Palamon and Arcite is founded, Thesius <sup>1</sup>marches from Athens to Thébes, gains a complete victory, and a messenger returns with an account of the

battle, during a short dialogue between his mother, *Æthra*, and the Chorus.

Shakespear introduces Time as a Chorus, to apologize for his breach of unity in the Winter's Tale; but the Chorus in the Greek tragedy is a perpetual accuser, and never an apologist; for, consisting of persons who take an active part in the drama, their continual presence shews that no more than the actual time of the performance of the ode passes during the interval; and therefore the liberty taken by the Greek dramatic poets, and allowed by Aristotle, of letting the drama exceed a little one revolution of the sun, is too much, and offends against the natural unity just mentioned.

In regard to the pathos, also, Shakespear is greatly inferior to many dramatic poets. In the terrific and sublime he is unequalled, but he does not possess the power of Otway, and many inferior poets, in exciting pity. He is pre-eminent in “unlocking the gates of horror and thrilling fears,” but not so “in opening the sacred source of sympathetic tears;” excepting, however, the part of

Constance, in King John, which, when aided by the voice and action of Mrs. Siddons, is almost too much for the feelings.

Considering Shakespear as a general poet, we may say that he highly possesses all the sublimity, the variety, the accurate description, and the scenery independent of representation, of the epopee, both serious and comic united, for we need not say the comic epopee was lost with the Margites of Homer, while we possess the Tom Jones of Fielding. Shakespear, also excels in that knowledge of the human character and human heart which forms the complete ethic poet, and that boldness of conception and facility of transition, abrupt but not unintelligible, which is the greatest excellence of the lyric poet.

That Shakespear sometimes swells his sublime to the bombast, and sometimes sinks his humour to buffoonery, cannot be denied; but far-fetched allusions to contemporary events, and hidden personal satire, which many of his commentators are very anxious to find, are very rarely indeed to be found in his writings.

The chief faults of his commentators, besides this, arise from a desire to say every thing they can say, not only on the passage commented on, but on every thing that has been said in the comment, as well as from a too great display of black-letter reading. That such a reading is as necessary to the investigation of certain passages in Shakespear, as dung is necessary to produce fertility, or scaffolding to erect a building; but when the business is accomplished, who would make an ostentatious display of either? Other inferior faults are, imputing expressions to the age of Shakespear, which are at present in common use; or to this or that particular county, when they are in common use throughout the kingdom.

The latest commentator, Mr. Seymour, is very anxious to correct the grammar of Shakespear, and to reform his obsolete language. I was surprised to find, in the edition before me, the substitution of akes for aches, making the blank verse halt for it. This may be expected from newspaper and gallery critics; but an editor of Shakespear should adhere to the rule laid down by Dr.

Johnson—“ It is sufficient that the words are Shakspear’s. If phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or coarse by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost; we shall no longer have the words of any author; and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall, in time, have little of his meaning.”

The word aches occurs as a dissyllable in a much later poet: Swift, the most accurate writer of his day, has this line in his City Shower:

‘ Old aches throb, your hollow tooth will rage.’

For so the line stands in every edition down to the Dublin one 1762, and consequently in those published during the author’s life; but the reformer has since laid his fingers on it, and in the modern editions it stands—

‘ Old akes will throb,’ &c.

I trust no critic living will be offended with the freedom with which I have treated his opinions: where such persons as Dr. Johnson, Mr. Warton, Mr. Steevens, and Sir William Blackstone, have failed, it is not disgrace for any man to fail.

As I did not wish to swell the work to an unreasonable size, I have not gone through the whole variorum edition, but have made my observations from the selection of the notes in the edition of Mr. Nichols.

OBSERVATIONS  
ON SOME OF THE  
CRITICISMS ON SHAKESPEAR.

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T E M P E S T.

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ACT I. SCENE II.

*Full poor cell.]* i. e. “A CELL in a great degree of poverty.”—STEEVENS. Surely it was not worth a note to tell us that *full*, is *full often-times* used for very.

*So dry was he for sway.]* i. e. “So thirsty. The expression, I am told, is not uncommon in the midland counties.”—STEEVENS. Good heavens ! Is not *dry*, in all parts of England, and by all ranks of people, used in this sense, at least, as

often as thirsty? I will venture to assert very often by the critic himself.

*A hint.]* "Hint is suggestion."—STEEVENS.  
Another wonderful discovery.

*Race.]* "Race, and raciness in wine, signifies (signify) a kind of tartness."—BLACKSTONE. The contrary is the case, they signify a taste of the native richness of the grape.

*Curtsied when they have and kissed.]* "As was anciently done at the beginning of some dances."—STEEVENS. I wonder the commentator missed so fair an opportunity of giving a learned dissertation on the cushion dance.

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*I will not take too much for him.]* "Too much means any sum; ever so much."—STEEVENS.

"I think the meaning is, let me take what sum I will, however great, I shall not take too much for him; it is impossible for me to sell him too dear."—MALONE. These profound critics are always digging to the centre for what lies on

the surface. There is no figure of speech more common among such persons as Stephano, than the expression of strong determination by seeming denial. As, to be sure, I shall not get drunk to-day. In this sense, the phrase is obviously used here.

## ACT III. SCENE I.

Ferdinand.—*Here's my hand.*

Miranda.—*And mine with my heart in it.]* “ It is still customary in the west of England, when the conditions of a bargain are agreed upon, for the parties to ratify it by joining their hands, and at the same time for the purchaser to give an earnest. To this practice the poet alludes.”—

HENLEY. Though it must be obvious to every reader of common sense, that the poet had no such allusion in his head, but only used the very common expression of giving hand and heart together, we are nevertheless obliged to the learned critic, for informing us, that it was once customary to bind a bargain by shaking hands and giving earnest. And that this obsolete custom is

*mirabile dictu!* Still to be found in the west of England.

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Bosky acres.]* “Bosky acres are fields divided from each other by hedge-rows;”—**STEEVENS.** Bosky acres are shrubby acres. Mr. Steevens does not seem to understand what hedge-row means; a narrow thicket dividing two fields which he supposes it to be, is in some counties called a *row*, in others a *spinny*, and in others a *shaw*. A hedge-row is a line of forest trees in a hedge. So Milton uses it, *hedge-row elms*; and so it is called all over England.

*Sharp furzes, prickly goss.]* “I know not how Shakespear distinguishes goss from furze, for what he calls furze, is called gorze or goss in the midland counties.”—**STEEVENS.**

Miller gives *furze*, *whin*, and *gorse*, as names for the *genista spinosa*. But furze is, I conceive, the proper name, and the other two provincial terms, just as a wheat stubble is called in Hampshire a

wheat ash. In Berkshire, where, though the pronunciation is broad, there are few provincial names of things, it is always called furze, and the name of goss or gorse is given to the *anonis*, called by Miller, cammock, petty whin, or rest harrow.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*Yes, for a score of kingdoms you should wrangle,  
And I would call it fair.]* “ I take the sense to be only this. Ferdinand would not, he says, play her false for the world. Yes, answers she, I would allow you to do it for something less than the world, for twenty *kingdoms*; and I wish you well enough to allow you after a little wrangle, that your play was fair. So likewise Dr. Grey.”—JOHNSON. This explanation would be just, if it had ended with the word *kingdoms*. I conceive Shakespear, who was no nice weigher of words, meant wrangling to be equivalent with playing false or with unfair advantage. So in Henry V. the king in allu-

sion to the tennis-balls, directs the ambassadors to tell the dauphin

He hath made a match with such a *wrangle*,  
That all the courts of France shall be disturb'd  
With chases.

# TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

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## ACT I. SCENE II.

*I see you have a month's mind to them.]* This expression is a fine topic for the critics, who take occasion to shew their learning, by describing it as a funeral ceremony of our ancestors. Such a ceremony, however, can have no reference to the phrase, as it is employed here, and which is still in use to express the having a great desire for a thing.

## ACT I. SCENE III.

*Which would be a great impeachment to his age.]*  
“ Impeachment, Mr. M. Mason very justly observes, signifies *reproach* or *imputation*.”—  
STEEVENS. It is very lucky that this common usage of the word is confirmed by two critics.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Servant.]* “Here Sylvia calls her lover servant, and again her gentle servant. This was the common language of ladies to their lovers, at the time when Shakespear wrote.”—SIR J. HAWKINS. In the noble gentleman of Beaumont and Fletcher, the lady’s gallant has no other name in the *Dramatis Personæ* than servant. Mistress and servant are always used for lovers in Dryden’s plays, and I believe later; the former word now is only in use, and in a very different sense.

## ACT II. SCENE IV.

*Tis but her picture I have yet beheld.]* “This is evidently a slip of attention, for he has seen her in the last scene, and in high terms offered her his service.”—JOHNSON.

“*I believe* Porteus means that as yet he has only seen her outward form, without having known her long enough to have any acquaintance with her mind.”—STEEVENS.

Dele *I believe*, and the last note is unexceptionable.

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*For long agone I have forgot to court:*

*Beside, the fashion of the time is changed.]*

“The modes of courtship, the acts by which men recommended themselves to the ladies.”—JOHNSON. What a wonderful elucidation of a difficult passage!

*Which is much in a bare Christian.] “Bare*  
has two senses, *mere* and *naked*.”—STEEVENS.  
Another wonderful discovery.

### ACT IV. SCENE III.

*As when thy lady and thy true love died,*

*Upon whose grave thou vow'dst true chastity.]*

The long note about widow's and widower's vows, and the citing Dugdale, may display Mr. Steevens's knowledge as an antiquary, but can have no relation to this passage, which obviously alludes to the loss of an honorable mistress, and not a wife.

THE  
MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

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ACT I. SCENE I.

*The luce is the fresh fish, the salt fish is an old fish.]* On this strange line, Messrs. Johnson, Steevens, Tollet, Malone, and Farmer, have written a great deal, without throwing the least light on it.

*She speaks small, like a woman.]* “When female characters were filled by boys, to speak small like a woman must have been a valuable qualification.”—HOLT WHITE. True, in an actor of female characters, but as Slender is speaking of Anne Page, and not of the boy who played the part, there is no name for the absurdity of this note.

*Yet I live like a poor gentleman born.]* “As great a fool as the poet has made Slender, it ap-

pears by his boasting of his wealth, his breeding, and his courage, that he knew how to win a woman ; this is a fine instance of Shakespear's knowledge of nature."—WARBURTON. Is it a proof of Shakespear's knowledge of nature, to make a character, which he has drawn so near absolute idiotism, as to be hardly a proper object of the drama, have a deep insight into the female disposition? Perhaps, the bishop undervalued a science in which he was no great adept himself. Shakespear, however, has made Slender act quite in character, by not saying a word but what must make him perfectly ridiculous to any woman, who was not as great a fool as himself.

#### ACT I. SCENE IV.

*A little wee face.]* Messrs. Collins and Ritson think this word, which is familiar to every child, a fit subject for serious investigation.

#### ACT II. SCENE I.

*You wot of.]* "To wot, is to know—obsolete."—STEEVENS. Another deep discovery.

*My desires had instance and argument to recommend them.]* “ Instance is example.”—JOHNSON. It seldom has any other meaning, but this is I think an exception, it seems here to mean *perseverance*.

### ACT II. SCENE III.

*My heart of elder.]* “ It should be remembered, to make this joke relish, that the elder has no heart. I suppose this expression were made use of in opposition to the common one, heart of oak.”—STEEVENS. The latter part of this note is just; but where did the critic learn that any plants was distinguished, by having, or not having a heart? Heart is used metaphorically for the middle of the wood, which in the oak is the most solid part of the timber, and in the elder only a soft pith.

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*Pittie ward, or pitty wary.]* As there is no place of this name, or any thing like it at Wind-

sor, I am afraid it will always remain inexplicable, but the bold alteration to *city-ward*, i. e. towards London, adopted in the text of this edition seems wrong, the scene being at Windsor; had it been laid in Westminster, it would have been very plausible. City is never applied to London in common discourse, as the metropolis in general, but only to the incorporated part of it, as distinguished from Westminster and the suburbs.

### ACT III. SCENE IV.

*Cut and long tail.]* We have the various opinions of Steevens, Reed, Sir J. Hawkins, and Judge Blackstone, on this phrase. I wish they had taken this opportunity to give us a few remarks on tag, rag, and bobtail.

### ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Hernes oak.]* There have been different opinions about this tree. Some have supposed it to be a tree in the little park, nearly a mile from the castle, which was cut down a few years since, and

which was near an old saw-pit, in which the fictitious fairies might have concealed themselves. This is the tree, I conceive, mentioned by them in this note of Steevens. Act V. Scene III. “ An oak, which may be that alluded to by Shakespear, is still standing close to a pit in Windsor forest. It is yet shewn as the oak of Herne.” The tree which the keepers shew as Hernes oak, is also in the little park, not much more than a hundred yards from the castle ditch, and in the middle of a row of elms, obviously above a century its juniors; it is in a state of decay, and might well have been an old tree in the time of Shakespear. I do not affirm this *is* the tree, but the other could *not* be the tree; for in Act V. Scene II. Page proposes to couch in the castle ditch, till they see the light of the fairies; and that this was not far from the tree appears from their laying hold on Falstaff, as soon as he rises from the ground.

## ACT IV. SCENE V.

*Paid.]* “ To pay, in our author’s time, signified to beat, so in Henry IV. Part I. *Seven of the eleven I paid.*”—MALONE. That pay often had, and still has, the signification of *beat*, is very true; but the illustration is an unlucky one, as in the passage quoted it signifies to kill.

Poins says, “ Pray God you have not murdered some of them!” Falstaff answers: “ Nay, that’s past praying for, two I am sure I have pay’d, two rogues in buckram suits.” Though on this very place, Malone says, *i. e.* “ Drubbed, beaten.” Whatever Falstaff means here, he means in the passage cited, as he is only particularly describing the identical circumstance after multiplying two men in buckram out of four, to seven out of eleven.

## ACT V. SCENE V.

*Ignorance itself is a plummet o’er me.]* Without citing any of the other wise notes, I shall only give

the very sensible remark of the editor, Mr. Nichols. “ Dr. Johnson’s note renders this perfectly intelligible, all those which follow it serving only to shew how agreeably learned critics can blunder.” The concluding note, on the title of Sir Hugh Evans, begins with an assertion, that, “ the question, whether priests were formerly knights in consequence of their being called *Sir*, still remains to be decided.” This, however, Mr. Douce has afterwards decided in the negative, after citing a number of learned authorities. But he has omitted one from our poet himself, where they are mentioned in contradistinction to each other; for in Twelfth Night, Viola says, “ I am one that had rather go with Sir Priest, than Sir Knight.” Mr. Douce, with all his learning, seems to be ignorant that the bachelors (bas chevaliers) of arts in our universities (at least in Oxford), are all styled domini in the battery books, and there are few clergymen who have not taken that, or a higher degree.

# TWELFTH NIGHT.

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## ACT I. SCENE A.

*Post.]* “ Post, in our author’s time, signified a messenger.”—MALONE. I believe it does still. In Markland’s Pleriplegia, one of the requisites of a good shooter is having a foot-post’s legs.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*An excellent breast.]* i. e. in singing. The putting breast for breath being fully established by T. Warton, Steevens makes the following remark on it—“ I suppose this cant term to have been current among the musicians of the age. All professions have in some degree their jargon ; and the remoter they are from liberal science, and the less consequential to the real interests of life, the more they strive to hide themselves behind affected terms and barbarous phraseology.”—Of

this note I shall only say, that it only shews Mr. Steevens had the same regard for musicians as his fellow-commentator, Dr. Johnson.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*Then come kiss me sweet and twenty.]* “ This line is obscure ; we might read—

“ Come a kiss then sweet and twenty.  
“ Yet I know not whether the present reading be not right ; for, in some countries, *sweet and twenty*, whatever be the meaning, is a phrase of endearment.—JOHNSON. If there is any such provincial expression of endearment, it is obviously used here, but I doubt the fact ; as for colloquial expressions, Dr. Johnson is no authority. The meaning I think is sufficiently clear, considering Shakespear’s carelessness of arrangement (which, indeed, was the *error of the time*), without the proposed alteration, which, however, is a good paraphrase of it. The same kind of expression occurs in the Merry Wives or Windsor, Act II. Scene I. *Good even, and twenty.*

*Draw three souls out of one weaver.]* That Warburton should suppose that Shakespear alluded to the peripatetic dogma of the *plastic*, the *animal*, and the *natural* soul does not surprise me ; it is exactly in Warburton's manner. But that Farmer should add a note to confirm it ; and Malone only *doubt* whether the author intended it, does surprise me.

## ACT II. SCENE IV.

*And dallies with the innocence of youth.]* “ To dally is to play, to trifle.”—STEEVENS. Was this explanation necessary ?

*But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems  
That nature pranks her in.]* Warburton, with his usual absurdity, would substitute *mind* for *in*. Steevens says, “ The miracle and queen of gems is her beauty. I humbly conceive Shakespear meant her natural excellence both of form and mind in contradistinction to the gifts of fortune.

*She pined in thought.]* “ Thought formerly signified melancholy.”—DOUCE. I should like to

see one instance of this, except by implication, as it may also mean *joy, hate, or love*. Th plain meaning here is so clear that it requires an unusual refinement in the absurd to give it any other.

## ACT II. SCENE V.

*My nettle of India.]* “The poet must mean a zoophyte called the Urtica Marina, abounding in the Indian seas.”—STEEVENS. Shakespear had no such idea. My pearl of India is a common expression ; and Sir Toby Belch was a character to call Maria his nettle of India, by a figure not uncommon in vulgar speech, from which such phrases as “the twinkling of a bed-post,” and “an arrow out of a fire-shovel,” are derived. This may be called low authority; but a critic, who will be always on stilts, would do better to shut his Shakespear and write comments on the modern tragedies.

## ACT II. SCENE V.

*Aqua' vitæ.]* “The old name for strong waters.”—JOHNSON. *Aqua' vitæ* means brandy

only, which is, in its native language, *Eau de vie*. We call it brandy from the German *brand win*, burning wine.

## ACT III. SCENE IV.

*I have sent after him—he says he'll come.]* On this clear passage we find the following inexplicable note—“i. e. I suppose now, or admit now, he'll come.”—WARBURTON.

*Why dost thou smile and kiss thy hand so oft?*] Mr. Reed has a long note on this *fantastical* custom, as he is pleased to call it; but why, if it were the custom, should it be more *fantastical* to kiss the hand than to take off the hat or bow the head I am to learn. The critic might have added that this custom is still in use among infants in their nurse's arms.

*Opposite.]* “Opposite here, as in many places, means *hostile, adverse*.—MALONE. This is the third time this observation has been made in this play, and by the same critic, once before on this identical passage when the letter is first read by Malvolio.

*Nay, if you be an undertaker I am for you.]* After much investigation of the meaning of undertaker by Steevens, Tyrrhwyt, and Ritson, the latter adds, “But I still think the speaker intends a quibble, the simple meaning of the word being, one who undertakes, or takes up the quarrel of another.”—In this simple meaning, and without any quibble whatever, the word is obviously used here.

## ACT IV. SCENE II.]

*Five wits.]* “Thus the five senses were anciently called.”—STEEVENS. Edgar says, in King Lear, “Bless thy five wits.” The common phrase “frightened out of one’s wits” gives the same meaning. Malone very justly observes, that “wit, in our author’s time, was the general term for intellectual power;” it continued so till the beginning of the eighteenth century. See Dryden’s plays, *Passim*.

*Are you not mad indeed, or do you but counterfeit?] M. Mason I must think right, in opposition both to Johnson and Malone. It should*

be thus read—Are you *not* mad (i. e. in your sound mind), indeed, or do you only counterfeit? (subaudi sanity). This reading of M. Mason is allowed by Malone to remove the difficulty; but he adds that, “considering the words that immediately precede is very harsh, and appears to be inadmissible.” I own it seems to me quite in unison with the whole scene, as well as with the character that speaks it.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*Natural Perspective.]* “A perspective seems to be taken for shows exhibited through a glass with such lights as make the figures seem really protuberant.”—JOHNSON. “I believe Shakespear meant nothing more by this natural perspective than a reflection from a glass or mirror.”—M. MASON. M. Mason is certainly right.

# MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*There is a kind of character in thy life  
That to the observer doth thy history  
Fully unfold.]* It really is wonderful to see the observations of Johnson, Steevens, and M. Mason, on this passage, which seems to me so clear, that no addition or alteration of words can possibly make it clearer, a thing, perhaps, that cannot be said of any other passage of the same length throughout this whole play.

*Your scope is our own.]* “That is your amplitude of power.”—JOHNSON. Very true, but did it need explanation?

## ACT I. SCENE II.

*The sweat.]* The allusion is very clear, and has nothing to do with the sweating sickness, as

suggested by Johnson ; the latter part of his note is right, but had been better omitted.

## ACT I. SCENE III.

*I got possession of Julietta's bed, &c.]* “ This speech is surely too indelicate to be spoken concerning Julietta before her face ; for she appears to be brought in with the rest, though she has nothing to say. The clown points her out as they enter, and yet, from Claudio's telling Lucio that *he knows the lady*, one would think she was not meant to make her personal appearance on the scene.”—STEEVENS. “ The little seeming impropriety there is, will be entirely removed by supposing, that when Claudio stops to speak to Lucio the Provost's officers depart with Julietta.”—RITSON. “ Claudio may be supposed to speak to Lucio apart.”—MALONE. The observation of Malone is confirmed by the text, when Claudio says, *Lucio, a word with you.* And there is this stage direction in the edition I have before me—  
*Takes him aside.*

## ACT I. SCENE V.

*As blossoming time, &c.]* Of the far-fetched explanations of Johnson and Steevens, and the clear and full series of the whole passage given by M. Mason, then there can be no doubt; but it is a passage that need not have been elucidated.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Provost.]* “A provost is generally, the executioner of an army.”—STEEVENS. “A prison for military offenders is at this day, in some places, called the *provost*.”—MALONE. Provost (usually called Prèvot, as most of our military words are now French) is a military goaler. The keeper of the Savoy prison is always called Provost. Mr. Douce is, however, right in saying that it does not mean a military officer, but a gaoler of respectability; something equivalent, I should suppose, with the lieutenant of the Tower. Would not these observations have been more proper on

the dramatis personæ, or on his first appearance in the preceding act?

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*And mercy then will breathe within your lips*

*Like man new made.]* “ You will then appear as tender-hearted and merciful as the first man was in his days of innocence immediately after his creation.”—MALONE. Considering what immediately precedes this, it seems to me rather to apply to the regeneration, than the creation, of man.

*She speaks, and 'tis*

*Such sense as my sense breeds with.]* “ The sentence signifies, Isabella does not utter *barren* words, but speaks such sense as *breeds* and *produces* consequences in Angelo’s mind. Those truths which *generate* no *conclusion* are often termed *barren facts*”—HOLT WHITE. Why, this is exactly the logic of Crambe, in Martinus Senblims. These truths which generate no conclusion are obviously the *individua vaga* of that

wise logician, which, like whore-masters and common strumpets, are barren.

## ACT II. SCENE IV.

*O place, O form, &c.]* Here, on five lines, we have three notes, the thoughts and labour of Johnson, Warburton, Steevens, M. Mason, and Malone. To M. Mason we are obliged for a paraphrase completely illustrating the passage ; and to Mr. Malone for the information that the devil is usually represented with horns and cloven-feet. The other gentlemen only puzzle their readers and try to confute one another.

*Die the death.]* “ It is a phrase taken from scripture.”—**STEEVENS.** It would have been more correct to say from the English translation of the scripture. It was most probably familiar both at the time when the bible was translated, and when Shakespear wrote.

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing  
That none but fools would keep.]* Dr. Johnson's defence of this passage against the absurdity of Warburton is just; but the observation of Steevens, that "keep in this place may not signify preserve, but care for," is to me inexplicable. This whole speech is one of the least obscure parts of the play; but what work have the critics made with it?

*And the corrupt deputy scaled.]* Notwithstanding the conjectures of many critics, this is to me quite unintelligible.

*Grange.]* Surely much critical enquiry is thrown away on this very common word.

## ACT III. SCENE II.

*This would make mercy swear and play the tyrant.]* "I do not much like mercy swear, the old reading, or mercy ~~swear~~, Dr. Warburton's

correction ; I believe it should be, this would make mercy *severe*."—FARMER. Dr. Farmer was certainly right to prefer his own correction to Warburton's, as he is always in the wrong. But surely, to suggest any amendment at all of a very clear passage, merely because he did not like it, and make the blank verse halt for it, is going a little beyond the bounds of sober criticism.

#### ACT IV. SCENE II.

*True men.]* " True man, in the language of ancient times, is always placed in opposition to thief."—STEEVENS. " Mr. Steevens seems to be mistaken in his assertion that true man, in ancient times, was always placed in opposition to thief; at least, in the book of Genesis, there is one instance to the contrary, c. XLII. v. 11. ' We are all one man's sons, we are all true men ; thy servants are no spies.'—HENLEY. The making this example an exception to the rule of Mr. Steevens, is taking him *au pied de la lettre* with a vengeance.

A spy is surely a *villain*, and a *thief* is a *knavé*,  
and we may surely say with Hamlet,

There's ne'er a villain living in all Denmark,  
But he's an arrant knave.—

### ACT IV. SCENE III.

*After him, fellows, bring him to the block.]*  
This speech JOHNSON says should be transferred from the duke to the provost, which TYRWHIT opposes. But surely, if emendation is ever justifiable, it is so from necessity, in this instance. For, in the first place, what authority could a friar, as the duke appears to be, have to order the officers of the provost? and the duke immediately afterwards adds, that to execute him in his present habit of mind would be damnable. Tyrwhit adds a curious reason for not changing the persons, viz. that the provost was ignorant of the state of Bernardine's mind. This seems to me the strongest reason why it should be given to the provost, and not to the duke, who did know the state of his mind.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*The strong statues*

*Stands like the fascits in a barber's shop,*

*As much in mock as mark.]* The scientific remarks of so many critics on this plain passage are truly laughable. Warburton gives us Latin quotations to prove that a barber's shop was the usual resort of the idle and the curious. Dr. JOHNSON tells us that a surgeon can keep all his instruments in a small box. Steevens tells us that barbers formerly used to pick people's teeth and ears; and to conclude, Henley, with much display of critical sagacity, gives the real sense of the passage, which must be obvious to every child. Like Saul among the prophets, I feel myself inspired with the spirit of explanatory criticism, and will illustrate this passage by similar species of jurisprudence recorded in the stable of Kingston inn, in the vicinity of Oxford.

*All you who come into this place,*

*To smoke among the straw,*

*Must pay a quart of ale at least,*

*Because it is the law.*

The law, however, and the forfeit it pronounced, were certainly as much in mock as mark.

Though there are several striking passages in Measure for Measure, there are more faults in it, as a whole, than in any of the plays that are undoubtedly written by Shakespear. How much stronger would the interest be if the friar was not known to be the duke till he suddenly broke forth, which should have been while Angelo was treating the remonstrance of Isabella (which might be made to Escalus) with insult, and just as he was saying, “ Away to prison with her.” The death of Angelo should be respited by the unexpected appearance of Claudio, and not by the preposterous interference of Isabella, which, notwithstanding the candour of Ritson, and the brutal pleasantry of Johnson, is a gross violation of consistency of character, only to be equalled by the offer of Valentine of his mistress to Proteus, in the Two Gentlemen of Verona. Such faults as these, and not the interval of time between the third and fourth act of the Winter’s Tale, and the making Bohemia a maritime coun-

try, are mortal sins against the probability of the drama. There is a great impropriety (not to mention the gross indecency of their language) in the impurity of such a character as Lucio; and the lenity with which Pompey and the bawd are treated, at a time when the interest of the drama turns on fornication being punished with death. There seems also justice in the remark of Johnson, that it is strange Isabella should not express either gratitude, joy, or wonder, at the sight of her brother; but perhaps they were supplied by the action. Shakespear was a player as well as a poet, and probably was more anxious for stage effect than the perfection of his drama as a composition. The players have often been censured for this, but let it be remembered, that there has been no dramatic writer of eminence, from *Æschyles* to Sheridan, who has not been connected with the theatre; and that, though many a bad play has become popular merely from theoretic effect, without theoretic effect there cannot be a good play.

# MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

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## ACT I. SCENE I

*But few of any sort, and none of name.]*  
“Sort is *rank, distinction*. I incline, however, to Mr. M. Mason’s easier explanation of *any sort*, which he says means of *any kind whatever*.”—STEEVENS. It is odd to take this opportunity of giving us an account how *sort* is sometimes used, when he allows himself, and which is sufficiently obvious from its opposition to *name*, that it here has its common meaning. The critic first says, *sort* is rank and distinction, and then says he inclines to think it is *not*.

*There are no faces truer than those which are so washed.]* “That is, none *honester*, none more *sincere*.”—JOHNSON. As there are abundance of this kind of explanations, and especially by this truly great man, I shall in future only mark them

by two or three notes of admiration, according to the nature of the case ! !

*He wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat, it ever changes with the next block.]* “ A block is the mould on which a hat is formed: the old writers use the word for the hat itself.”—STEEVENS. The first piece of information surely need not have been given us: the last should have been confirmed by the authority of at least one of these old writers.

*I am sun-burn'd.]* “ But why sun-burn'd? I believe we should read, thus every one goes to the wood but I, and I am sun-burn'd: thus does every one but I find a shelter, and I am left exposed to wind and sun.”—JOHNSON. “ I am sun-burn'd *may* mean I have lost my beauty, and am consequently no longer such an object as can tempt a man to marry.”—STEEVENS. For *may* read *must*, and the note of Steevens is unexceptionable. Steevens only doubts when he is clearly in the right: when he is wrong he is positive enough. If it were necessary to quote authority in support of what is so obviously right, our poet

himself gives one in Troilus and Cressida, where Hector says, in his Gothic challenge in honor of Trojan beauty, that if it should not be accepted, he would say,

The Grecian dames were sun-burn'd, and not worth  
The splinter of a lance.—

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*The night raven.]* i. e. “The owl, Νυκτίν’ ὄψαξις

STEEVENS. This note, short as it is, does the critic knight’s service. It shews that he is acquainted both with natural history and the Greek character. A more ordinary critic would have been contented with Nycticorax, which may mean an owl, as Ainsworth renders it. But Νυκτίνοψαξ divided into its constituent parts, Νύξ and Κόψαξ (not ὄψαξ) is Corvus Nocturnus, a night crow.

*There will she sit in her smock, &c.]* This Mr. Henley, with a sagacity that wants a name, supposes to be allusive to a letter from Mary Queen of Scots, to Bothwell, which begins, “ I am nakit and ganging to sleep, and zit I cease not to scrib-

ble all this paper in so meikle as rest is thereof." The absurdity of it would be sufficient to make this observation fall to the ground, without even the proof brought by Steevens that the word in the letter is *irkit* (uneasy) and not *nakit*.

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*What his heart thinks, his tongue speaks.]* "A covert allusion to the old proverb,

' As the fool thinketh,  
The bell clinketh.'--STEEVENS.

So covert that it required more than a lynx's eye to discover it.

*From the waist downward all slops.]* "Slops are large loose breeches or trowsers, worn only by sailors at present."—STEEVENS. "Hence evidently the term slop-seller, for a vendor of old clothes."—NICHOLLS. These notes are really curious, as affording a striking example of the derivation of a general word from some singular and obsolete circumstance. Thus, from one, among hundreds of names given to female dress, is the general word mantua-maker derived.

## ACT III. SCENE III.

*Shaven Hercules.]* It was impossible for any one but Warburton to conceive our poet meant Sampson by this.

## ACT III. SCENE IV.

*He eats his meat without grudging.]* The long, and I may add absurd, note of Johnson about this passage, is a proof, among too many in his notes on Shakespear, how very weakly a man of great genius may write, by turning himself to objects he is unfit for. I perfectly agree with Mr. Mason, that the meaning is, “Benedict is in love, and takes kindly to it.”

## ACT III. SCENE V.

*If two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind.]*  
“ This is not out of place, or without meaning. Dogberry, in his vanity of superior parts, apologising for his neighbour, observes, ‘that if two men ride on a horse, one must ride behind.’ The first place of rank or understanding can belong but

to one, and that happy one ought not to despise his inferior.”—JOHNSON. Of the critic, who could write such a piece of pompous inanity, considering who he is, we are tempted to say with Pope—

“ Who would not laugh if such a *one* there be ?  
Who would not weep if Atticus were he ?”

#### ACT IV. SCENE I.

*If either of you know any inward impediment, &c.]* “ This is borrowed from our marriage ceremony, which (with a few changes in the phraseology) is the same as was used in the time of Shakespear.”—DOUCE. This is very true, and so it is that two and two make four. Had the friar’s exhortation marked the exact changes of the phraseology, the remark, indeed, would have been curious.

*If ever love had interest in his liver.]* “ The liver, in conformity to ancient supposition, is frequently mentioned by Shakespear as the seat of love.”—STEEVENS. I wonder the critic did not shew his learning by confirming this wonderful

discovery from quotations of Horace. As he has omitted this, I will indulge the reader with a quotation from Prior, which throw some light on this obscure passage.—

“ Nor e'er can Latin poets prove  
Where lies the real seat of love.—  
*Jecur* they burn, and *Cor* they pierce,  
As either best supplies their verse.  
Thus, I presume, the British muse  
May take the freedom strangers use ;  
If Cupid throws a single dart,  
We make him wound the lover's *heart* ;  
But if he takes his bow and quiver,  
'Tis sute he must transfix the *liver*.”

*Princes and Counties.]* “ County was the ancient general name for a nobleman.”—STEEVENS.  
Dele *general*; and for *nobleman*, read *earl* or *count*.

*But manhood is melted in courtesies, valor into compliment.]* i. e. “ into ceremonious obeisance, like the courtesies dropped by women.”—STEEVENS. This is really a note one can scarcely read with common patience. It seems impossible, even for the most absurd criticism, to find any

other meaning here for courtesy than its proper general signification—*Dropping* a courtesy too !

## ACT IV. SCENE II.

*'Fore God they are both in a tale.]* “ This is an admirable stroke of humour. Dogberry says that they are false knaves, and from that denial of the charge, which one in his wits could not but be supposed to make, he infers a communication of counsels, and records it as an evidence of their guilt.—SIR J. HAWKINS. “ If the learned annotator will amend his comment by omitting the word *guilt* and inserting the word *innocence*, it will (except as to the supposed communication of counsel, which should likewise be omitted or corrected), be a just and pertinent remark.”—RITSON. By the aid of such omissions and such corrections, every note on Shakespear in every edition, may be made equally just and pertinent. But the truth is, Dogberry neither infers their innocence, their guilt, or their communication ; he had heard of getting at the truth by separate ex-

amination, and sagaciously asking a question of both which they could not but give the same answer to, expresses his surprise at the failure of his wise experiment.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*Cry sorrow away, &c.]* Messrs. Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Tyrwhyt, Heath, T. Warton, Ritson, Malone, Steevens, M. Mason, Hanmer, Farmer, and Warburton, your notes here are well defined by the title of the play. Dr. Johnson alone has given the true meaning.

*Candle wasters.]* Why Mr. Whally should give us a long explanation of this, which he himself thinks not satisfactory, exceeds my comprehension.

*Impose me to whatever penance your invention can lay upon my sin.]* i. e. "Command me to undergo whatever penance."—MALONE. This is the sense but not the construction of the sentence. *Impose* is used here (as Steevens observes), as it is at the universities—give me an

*imposition or exercise by way of punishment, i. e.  
a penance to whatever extent you please.*

## ACT V. SCENE II.

*I cannot woo in festival terms.]* i. e. “In splendid phraseology, such as differ from common language, as holy-days from common-days.”—  
**STEEVENS.** I conceive it rather means affected and finial than splendid phraseology, as in the speech of Hotspur—

“With many holyday and lady terms.”

*Claudio undergoes my challenge.]* i. e. “Is subject to it.”—  
**STEEVENS.** This is surely not an explanation of the passage, which, though oddly expressed, is sufficiently clear.

An anonymous critic, in a concluding note, joins with Johnson in blaming the repetition of the same scheme to entrap Beatrice, which had before been used for Benedict. But the intention of the poet was to shew that persons of either sex might be made in love with each other by

supposing themselves beloved, though they were before enemies; and how he could have done this by any other means I do not know. He wanted to shew the sexes were alike in this case, and to have employed different motives would have counteracted his own design.

# MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Earthlier happy.]* Certainly, as Dr. Johnson observes, a very unusual mode to express “ happier on earth.” i. e. “ As to worldly enjoyment ;” which is, however, obviously the poet’s meaning. The amendment proposed by Johnson and Pope, *earlier happy* may be made at the expence only of *two letters and common sense.*

*We must starve our sight*

*From lover's food till morrow deep midnight.]*

“ Shakespear has a little forgot himself it appears, from p. 107, that to-morrow night would be within three nights of the new moon when there is *no moon-shine at all*, much less at deep midnight. The same oversight occurs in Act III. Scene I.”

—BLACKSTONE. Whether *this* is an oversight

the judge should have tried on an issue of Theseus, versus the Athenian almanack. I should think, however, on whatever side the verdict was given the present passage must be acquitted. A lover might contrive to be near enough his mistress to see her in a clear night, a little before Old Mayday in England (Shakespear thought little of the length of days at Athens) though, perhaps, Sir W. Blackstone would not admit an evidence to swear to the features of a highwayman in such circumstances. What is meant by something *less* than *no moonshine at all* I do not understand.

*As waggish boys in game.]* “*Game* here signifies not *contentious play*, but *sport, jest*.” So Spencer,

“ ‘Twixt earnest and ‘twixt game.’—JOHNSON.

Game is never used for contentious play, in general as a substutive. It signifies, indeed, this or that particular game with the article, as a game at whist, a game at chess; and to game is never used in any other sense, therefore the note is quite needless. Game, without an article, is always

used either for sport and jest, or for certain animals, in the language of law. If, therefore, Dr. Johnson was determined to tell us the word was employed in its common meaning, and not in a figurative one, he should have told us it neither meant partridge, harein or pheasant.

### ACT I. SCENE II.

*And so grow to a point.]* If it were necessary to seek for any meaning where nonsense is obviously intended, or to investigate the precise construction of words in the speech immediately after one which contains *generally man by man*. I should say, i. e. proceed to some conclusion. To transcribe the notes of Messrs. Steevens and Warner would be tedious and useless, but Dr. Johnson's note may be amusing, if any thing can be so, which shews how weak the greatest mind may become when its energies are misapplied. Dr. Warburton reads *go on*, but grow is used in allusion to his name, Quince.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*The wisest aunt.]* Here Steevens, with his usual habit of finding out something indecent, has a note to prove that *aunt* means *bawd*, which he takes up again in a note on the first song of Autolycus, in the Winter's Tale. He concludes thus, “The *wisest aunt* may therefore mean the most *sentimental bawd*, or perhaps the most *prosaic old woman*.” On this Mr. Ritson very justly observes, “The first of these conjectures is much too wanton and injurious to the word *aunt*, which, in this place at least, certainly means no other than an innocent old woman.”

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*No night is now with hymn or carol blest.]* “Hymns and carols, in the time of Shakespear, during the season of Christmas, were sung every night about the streets, as a pretext for collecting money from house to house.”—STEEVENS. Such a note as this is almost too much for the patience.

We may as well be told on this passage in *As You Like it*—

“ If you have been where bells have knoll'd to church,  
If ever sat at any good man's table——”

That, in *the time of Shakespear*, public prayers were announced by a bell, and people sat down to table when they dined.

*When we have laughed to see the sails conceive  
And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind,  
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait,  
(Following (her womb then big with my young  
squire),*

*Would imitate.]* I have here marked the parenthesis twice, the first as it is in this edition, and which Dr. Farmer and Mr. Malone contend for. The second, as it must have stood in the edition Dr. Farmer made his remark on, and which I think right. Dr. Farmer says, “ Perhaps the parenthesis should begin sooner; as I think Mr. Kenric observes (a pretty authority) ! ”

“ (Following her womb then big my young squire.

So in Trulla's combat with Hudibras,

— She press'd him home,  
That he retir'd and follow'd his bum.”

" And Dryden says of his Spanish Friar, ' his great belly walks in state *before him*, and his gouty legs come limping after it.' Mr. Malone observes, " *Which*, according to the present regulation, must mean, *which motion of the ship with swelling sails*. According to the old regulation it must refer to embarked traders ;" which occurs before the passage here cited. I do not see the force of this last observation. Shakespear is always careless about his antecedents, but if he were not it proves nothing here, as in the old regulation following and imitate must both relate to the antecedent of *which*, and the big-bellied woman could only imitate the big bellied sails, and not the embarked traders. When I say this, however, I am aware that there are some conjectures of some of the critics full as absurd and far-fetched as an allusion between embarked traders and the young Hans en Kelder. Why did Mr. Nichols adopt this reading of Dr. Farmer when he himself says the old reading is defencible ?

*Thou rememberest*

*When once I sat upon a promontory, &c.]* How

could Mr. Ritson so misemploy his time as to write one single word to refute the folly of Warburton on this passage?

*You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant.]* “I learn from Edward Fenton’s Certain Secret Wonders of Nature, that there is now-a-days a kind of adamant which draweth unto it flesh, and the same so strongly that it hath power to knit and tie together two mouths of contrary persons, and draw the heat of a man out of his body without offending any part of him.”---STEEVENS. If this is the use of black letter learning, away with it; for it has no relation whatever to this obvious metaphor.

*You do impeach your modesty too much.]* i. e. “Bring in question.”---STEEVENS. Here we receive this wonderful explanation a second time. See a note on the Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act I. Scene III.

*It is not night when I do see your face.]* “This is paraphrased from two lines of an ancient Poet. (Tibullus.)

" — Tu nocte vel atra  
Lumen, et in solis tu mihi turba locis." JOHNSON.

What relation this part can have to the passage in question is not very apparent.

" As the works of King David might be more familiar to Shakespear than Roman poetry perhaps, on the present occasion, the 11th verse of the 139th psalm was in his thoughts---Yea the darkness is no darkness with thee, but the night is as clear as the day."---STEEVENS. With all due deference to the learned opinions of Johnson and Steevens, I do think it possible that Shakespear might have written this without any assistance either from Tibullus or King David.

*On man.]* Mr. Steevens considers these rhymes as a sure proof that the broad Scotch pronunciation once prevailed in England. What would he infer from this triplet of Prior?

O potent virtue ! O victorious fair !  
Forgive at least a trial too severe ;  
Accept the triumph, and forget the war.

Or from the frequency of such rhymes is *wit* and *write* in so correct a writer as Pope ?

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*Musk Rose.]* “What is at present called the Musk Rose was a flower unknown to English botanists in the time of Shakespear. About fifty years ago it was brought into this country from Spain.”—STEEVENS. As it is clear Shakespear could not mean a flower he had never heard of, he most probably means the moss rose—‘*Rosa provincialis spirosum pedunculo muscoso.*’—MILLAR, 1741. As Millar does not speak of this particularly, most likely it was imported as early as any of our garden roses, none of which are indigenous. In the same edition he mentions the Single Musk Rose, the Double Musk Rose, and the Evergreen Musk Rose, which he does not mention as new or curious plants at that time; but simply says they are the latest rose, and will seldom flower before September, and will continue till October if they are planted in *a shady situation*, which does not indicate their being lately brought from a hot climate.

## ACT III. SCENE. I.

*Brake.]* “ Brake, in the present instance, means a thicket or furze bush.”—STEEVENS.  
“ Brake, in the West of England, is used to express a large extent of ground over-grown with furze, and appears both here and in the next scene, to convey the same idea.”—HENLEY. In regard to the first note, *brake*, neither here nor anywhere else means a furze bush; neither could a furze bush serve for a tyring room. As to the second, not in the West of England only, but in the English language, *brake* means a piece of ground covered with brambles or furze, whether of one or fifty acres. So far from furze giving it its character, one of brambles is generally called simply a *brake*, and the other a *furze brake*.

*Dewberries.]* “ Dewberries, strictly and properly, are the fruit of one species of the wild bramble called the creeping or lesser bramble; but as they stand here among the more delicate fruits, they must be understood to mean raspberries,

which are also of the bramble kind."—T. HAWKINS. *Dewberries* are *gooseberries*, which are still so called in many parts of the kingdom."—HENLEY.—The Dewberry is well known all over England by those who speak the English language, to be the fruit of that bramble called by Millar *Rubus minor fructu cæruleo*, from which circumstance it is sometimes vulgarly called the blueberry. It is a very delicate fruit, and as well worthy of horticulture as the strawberry. I should like to know in what part of the kingdom gooseberries are called dewberries.

*Patch.]* "In the western countries *cross patch* is still used for a perverse ill-natured fool." T. WARTON. This eternal jargon about the western, the northern, and the midland counties, is insupportable. Cross Patch is the nursery-name for a froward child. My friend Tom Warton might have heard it without going two furlongs west of Trinity College.

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*Bearing the badge of faith.]* "This is said in allusion to badges, i. e. family crests, anciently

worn on the sleeves of servants and retainers."

—STEEVENS. Thank you, Sir.

*None of nobler sort.]* "Sort is here used for deeper or quality."—MALONE. Mr. Malone, we are equally obliged to you.

*Even till the eastern gate all fiery red, &c.]*

"What the fairy monarch means to inform Puck of is, that he was not compelled to vanish at the first appearance of dawn like meaner spirits."—STEEVENS. This is a wonderful discovery of the critic's, but it is a pity he had not made it sooner, he might then spared his very foolish, and something prurient note about morning's love.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*The Lunatic, the lover, and the poet.]* "An ingenious modern writer supposes that our author had here in contemplation, Orestes, Mark Anthony, and himself."—MALONE. If Mr. Malone does not write this ironically, or is not much mistaken as to the *genius* of the writer: this is a sad proof of the excessive imbecility a man of genius may fall into.

*Say what abridgement have you for this evening.]*  
“By abridgement our author may mean a dramatic performance which crowds the events of years into a few hours.”—STEEVENS. “Does not abridgement in the present instance signify amount to beguile the tediousness of the evening, or in one word, pastime?”—HENLEY. Certainly it does. It would be impossible to conceive how Steevens could have given the explanation he has, if we had not seen some other of his notes.

## ACT V. SCENE II.

*Now the hungry lion roars.]* “It has been justly observed by an anonymous writer, that among this assemblage of familiar circumstances attending midnight either in England or its neighbouring kingdoms, Shakespear would never have thought of intermixing the exotic idea of the hungry lion roaring, which can be heard no nearer than in the deserts of Africa, if he had not read the 104th psalm: ‘Thou makest darkness that it may be night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do move, the lions roaring after their prey, do

seek their meat from God."—MALONE. Here is another of Mr. Malone's ingenious friends ! Write *foolishly* for *justly* and Mr. Malone will be right. I dare say Shakespear neither knew or cared whether there were any lions in Attica, for there, and not England, or its neighbouring kingdoms, is the scene laid. But we will suppose (and I dare say we shall be right) that Shakespear considered England only ; are not lions as frequent in our discourse, and as often the subject both of simile and metaphor, as if they were to be found as commonly in our woods, mixed with foxes and badgers, as oranges are in our markets mixed with nuts and apples. Do not we all

"Talk as familiarly of roaring lions  
As maids of thirteen do of puppy dogs."

It is true (except in the tower, for Exeter Change had no Pidcock then) Shakespear could not well have heard a lion roar, neither could he hear a wolf behowl the moon, which is one of the *assemblage of familiar circumstances attending midnight* in England, mentioned by this anonymous gentleman. It is true he adds neighbouring kingdoms, but

for what reason, except to obviate an absurdity by a greater, I cannot imagine, as we have no reason to suppose Shakespear was ever out of England; and it is certainly equally impossible in England to hear a wolf bay the moon in the woods of Picardy, and a lion roar for his prey in the deserts of Africa.

*To sweep the dust behind the door.]* “This is a common expression, and common practice in large old houses where the doors of halls and galleries are thrown back and seldom or ever shut.”

—DR. FARMER. Dust, in such cases, will certainly collect behind the doors; but I suspect the Doctor and I, if we were to fill up the sentence, should not concur in the preposition. Yet I think the Doctor’s house-maid, if she were ordered to sweep the dust behind the door, would sweep *from* behind, and if she adopted what I suppose to be his reading, would incur his censure rather than his approbation.

# LOVE'S LABOURS LOST.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Not to see ladies, study, fast, not sleep.]* “The words, as they stand, will express the meaning intended, if pointed thus,

Not to see ladies—study—fast—not sleep.”—M. MASON.

Two and two make four. The meaning of this is also sufficiently clear, if properly pointed.

*At Christmas I no more desire a rose,  
Than wish a snow in May's new fangled shows.]* I cannot conceive any difficulty in this, or that there is any appearance of a line being lost. What T. Warton says, I think, with Steevens, to be right. “By these shows the poet means May games, at which a snow would be very unwelcome and unexpected: it is only a periphrasis for May.”

*This child of fancy, that Armado hight.]* If Mr. Malone thought it necessary to swell his edi-

tion of Shakespear by the dissertations of Warburton and Tyrwhit on the origin of romance, surely they might have been omitted in an edition which professes to compress the exuberance of notes.

### ACT I. SCENE II.

*The dancing horse.]* Though it is curious to know the art of making horses learned is coeval with Shakespear, one quotation about Banks's horse would have been sufficient, but we have here a heap of authorities and a wooden cut into the bargain. We know that to explain every word and every allusion of our poet, much black letter reading is as necessary as dung is to the production of vegetables ; but who would make a pompous display of either ?

*The rational hind Costard.]* “ Perhaps we should read irrational hind.”—TYRWHIT. “ The rational hind perhaps only means the *reasoning brute*, the *animal with some shew of reason*.”—STEEVENS. “ I have always read irrational hind ; if hind be taken in its bestial sense, Armado makes

Costard a female."—FARMER. Shakespear uses it in its bestial sense in Julius Cæsar, Act 1. Scene 3, and as of the masculine gender:

He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.

Again, in King Henry IV. Part I. Act 1. Scene 3. ' You are a shallow rascally hind, and you lie.'—STEEVENS. I can have no doubt but that hind is used here for a clown, as also in the passage quoted from Henry IV. Neither is the passage brought from Julius Cæsar any excuse for the making Costard a female here. No particular cowardice is imputed to Costard. Cowards, and effeminate men might, in such a passage as that in Julius Cæsar, be called woman, but to have called Costard a *natural woman* here would have been very strange: as for rational, is any thing more usual than an irony of this kind in common speech? If this is not allowable, I have certainly misused the words *wise*, and *learned*, and *sagacious*, often in the course of these remarks.

*Here, good my glass.]* Here Drs. Johnson and Farmer have each a note too long and too ab-

surd to quote, to shew it was the fashion of the times for ladies to wear mirrors at their girdles. Steevens says justly (with a *perhaps* though) that Dr. Johnson is mistaken, and that the forester is the mirror. It is impossible for common sense to suppose otherwise.

*Erewhile.]* “ Just now, a little while ago : so Raleigh :

Here lies Hobbinol, our shepherd while eer.—JOHNSON.” Would not the first line of *Paradise Regained* been a more obvious illustration, and the single word *lately* at least a better explanation than *just now* ?

*Suitor.]* Farmer and Steevens both contend that *suitor* and *shooter* were pronounced alike in the time of Shakespear, and Malone says the same is the case in Ireland now, with the vulgar. I believe we may say the same with the vulgar of London ; they very often pronounce the *s* as if it were aspirated ; indeed *sure* and *sugar* are pronounced so by every one. The *oo* for the *u* is also too common with those who are not to be classed with the vulgar. *Too* for *tu*, whoever has been

at a Westminster play, will find to be the pronunciation of that truly respectable school; and persons educated there will often carry it into their pronunciation of English, and say *Toosday* and *presoom*, instead of *Tuesday* and *presume*.

*Wide of the bow-hand.]* Surely Mr. Douce might have spared himself the trouble of writing a note to tell us that *this must* mean wide of the mark on that hand in which the bow was held.

## ACT V. SCENE III.

*Gnat.]* Mr. Theobald and the succeeding editors read *knot*, but as the arguments of Steevens and M. Mason are unanswerable, *gnat* is here very properly restored, from the authority of the old copies, supported both by rhyme and reason.

*For where is any author in the world  
Teaches such beauty as a lady's eye?] “A lady's  
eye gives a fuller notion of beauty than any au-  
thor.”—JOHNSON!!!*

*For when love speaks, the voice of all the gods  
Makes Heaven drowsy with the harmony].* The wisdom of almost all the critics is employed on

this passage. The following explanation of Heath seems to me just. “The meaning is, whenever love speaks all the gods join their voices with his in harmonious concert.” On the words *makes Heaven drowsy*, Mr. Tyrwhit observes, “If one could possibly suspect Shakespear of having read Pindar, one should say, that the idea of music making the heavens drowsy, was borrowed from the first Pythian.” But is it not possible that Pindar and Shakespear should think alike on the sedative power of music, without one borrowing from the other?

## ACT V. SCENE II.

[*St. Denis to St. Cupid.*] “The princess of France invokes with too much levity the patron of her country to oppose the power of Cupid.”—JOHNSON. Is Dr. Johnson serious in this vindication of the sanctity of one of the seven Champions of Christendom?

[*Vouchsafe, bright moon, and these thy stars to shine.*] “When Queen Elizabeth asked an ambassador how he liked her ladies. ‘It is hard,’

said he, ' to judge of stars in the presence of the sun.'—JOHNSON. Why, here we have Pindar again quoted by the ambassador.

Μηκέθ' Ἀλίς σκόπει  
Α'λλο θαλπιότεραν  
Εν ἀμέρα φαεινὸν ἄσρον.

Shakespear, however, I suppose, rather remembered his Horace,

Micat—inter ignes,  
—Luna minores.

*Woolward.]* The meaning of this word, with its etymology, is so obvious from the context, that it is really wonderful to see the absurd lumber of pompous nonsense produced on it by Grey, Farmer, and T. Warton; as for Warburton, no absurdity of his is wonderful.

*Converse of breath.]* "Converse may, in this line, mean *interchange*."—JOHNSON. It certainly does, as it does also in the more familiar word conversation. The expression here is only an affected periphrasis for *vivā voce*, conversation.

# MERCHANT OF VENICE.

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## ACT I. SCENE III.

*Wands.]* “A wand in our author’s time was the usual term for what we now call a switch.”—  
MALONE. Good heavens! what word shall we have next referred to the time of Shakespear? A wand is well known at this time to be a long thin stick, peeled; one is carried now by the Lord Chamberlain in the king’s presence, by all stewards of feasts, and by the sheriffs in the courts of assize, and also (mark, this, ye critics!) by conjutors. Of both these latter uses, take an authority from Addison.

*Sir George Truman.* Where is my wand?

*Vellum.* A fine taper stick! it is well chosen. I will keep this till you are sheriff of the county.

*Switch* is a modern cant term for a thin twig, used as a substitute for a whip.

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*Give me your blessing, &c.]* “ In this conversation between Launcelot and his blind father, there are frequent references to the deception practised on the blindness of Isaac, and the blessing obtained in consequence of it.”—HENLEY. I confess I cannot find these references: neither is there any probability that such a manifest ridicule on part of the sacred scriptures should be permitted on the stage. Shakespear, it is true, has frequent allusions to the Bible; there are many in this play, but they are never introduced indecently or irreverendly.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*If a Christian do not play the knave and get thee.]* “ I suspect that the waggish Launcelot designed this for a broken sentence, and get thee, implying *get thee with child.* Mr. Malone, however, supposes him to mean only carry thee away from thy father’s house.”—STEEVENS. “ I should not have attempted to explain so easy a passage, if the ignorant editor of the second folio, thinking

probably that the word *get* must necessarily mean *beget*, had not altered the text, and substituted *did* for *do*, the reading of all the old and authentic editions; in which he has been copied by every subsequent editor. Launcelot is not talking about Jessica's father, but about her future husband. I am aware, that in a subsequent scene he says to Jessica, *Marry, you may partly hope your father got you not.* But he is now on another subject."—MALONE. "From the general censure expressed in the preceding note, I take leave to exempt Mr. Reed, who, by following the first folio, was no sharer in the inexpiable guilt of the second."---STEEVENS. Supposing this to be the proper reading, Malone must be right in conceiving *get* to mean *marry her, by stealing her from her father*; to suppose it implies *get thee with child*, is exactly worthy of the wagish Mr. Steevens; but I confess I am guilty of the *inexpiable* crime of reading *did* for *do* with the second folio, and every subsequent editor, except Mr. Reed. I do not exactly see that Launcelot is on a different subject in the other

similar passage, for when he calls her *most beautiful Pagan, most sweet Jew*, he does allude to her descent from an unbelieving father. This sense of the passage here seems to me strongly confirmed by these words in the subsequent soliloquy of Jessica, which point strongly to her father, and are clearly the consequence of what has been just said by Launcelot:

Mark, what heinous sin it is in me,  
To be ashamed to be my father's child.

This appears an apology to herself for not checking the suspicion of Launcelot, as feeling conscious she wished it was just.

## ACT II. SCENE VI.

*I am bid forth.]* “I am invited.”—MALONE !!  
*Venus pigeons.]* “Lovers have in poetry been always called turtles or doves, which in lower language may be pigeons.”—JOHNSON !! What a lucky thing it was Fluellen, in Henry the Fifth, saved Dr. Johnson the trouble of explaining Alexander the pig, by telling us himself that “the

pig, or the great, or the mighty, or the huge, or the magnanimous, are all one reckonings, save the phrase is a little variations."

*Strumpet wind.]* "Surely the bark ought to be of the masculine gender, or the allusion wants something of propriety."—STEEVENS. Surely, we need not be so hypercritical about the gender of ships, when we may say of the *Alcides* that *she* is a fine *man* of war.

## ACT II. SCENE V.

*Wry-neck'd fife.]* How this can be applicable to the modern fife does not appear, but the conjecture of Mr. Seymour is the acme of absurdity, accompanied as usual by bold assertion, who wonders it was possible that Mr. M. Mason should transfer the wry-neck'dness from the performer to the instrument. I believe the earliest time of the transfer of the name of the instrument to the performer in military language, was during Queen Anne's wars, for in the Spectator an old country gentleman expresses his surprise at his son, in a

letter from the army, mentioning a saucy trumpet and a drum that carried messages.

### ACT II. SCENE VIII.

*Let it not enter in your mind of love.]* “ So all the copies, but I suspect some corruption.”—JOHNSON. Langton (whose death I have to lament since I first wrote this observation) very judiciously proposes “ to remove this imaginary corruption by putting a comma after mind, which is confirmed by the observation of Steevens, that of love is an adjuration sometimes used by Shakespeare.” The editor of this edition, though he inserts these notes, adheres to the old punctuation in the text.

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*If you prick us, do we not bleed?]* “ Are not Jews made of the same materials as Christians? says Shylock; thus in Plutarch’s life of Cæsar, p. 140. 4to. v. iv. Cæsar does not consider his subjects are mortal, and bleed when they are

pricked, ἀδελφὸν τῶν τραγουδέτων λογίσεται Κλαῖσαρ ἐπιθυμῶ  
μὲν ἀρκεῖ."—S. W. A more useless display of stupid  
pedantry I have seldom met with.

## ACT III. SCENE V.

*How his words are suited.]* "I believe the meaning is, what a *series* or *suite* of words he has independent of meaning, how one word draws on another, without relation to the matter."—JOHNSON. "I cannot think either that the word suited is derived from the word suite, as Johnson supposes, as that I believe was introduced into our language long since the time of Shakespear, or that Launcelot's words were independent of meaning. Lorenzo expresses his surprise that a fool should apply them so properly."—M. MASON. Dr. Johnson is certainly wrong in the meaning of the word *suit* here. M. MASON is as certainly right in this respect, but most essentially wrong in the manner in which he supposes it used. Lorenzo must be a fool indeed to suppose Launcelot applied the words in his last speech

properly. He only laughs at the very odd and improper way in which they are applied, as one might say of a bad rider—" how he sits his horse!" As to the former part of Mr. M. Mason's note, I believe *suite* for a train of followers, pronounced properly *sweet*, is very modern ; but I much doubt of *suit* applied to cards and pronounced like a *suit* at law or a *suit* of clothes is not coeval with Shakespear.

#### ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Royal Merchant.]* Among the variety of authorities given for this epithet, I am surprised that the title of one of Beaumont Fletcher's plays escaped the notice of the commentators.

*But say it is my humour.]* " Suppose it is my fancy."—HENLEY. What a world of pains this profound critic must have taken to find out the meaning of this passage.

*Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered thee.]* I am surprised that none of the critics have noticed the inconsistency here, the only offers are first by Bassanio in these words:—

"For thy three thousand ducats there are six."

And again he offers him twice the sum, and then ten times the sum. The Jew afterwards alludes to this offer from, I suppose, the same forgetfulness.

*The man that hath no music in himself, &c.]* This denunciation against the *ἀπονοι* is certainly too severe. But Dr. Johnson takes Shakespear in too literal a sense; he is not speaking of *vacant fiddlers*, or coxcombs in music. But I confess even I, who would almost as soon stand up to my neck in water in winter as sit out a concert, should have no great opinion of that man who was dead to the effect of a pathetic song set to a simple melody. What are the pleasures we receive from poetry, and even painting, but a certain internal perception of harmony, a music in oneself.

*I'll fear no other thing*

*So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.]* It is surprising that Dr. Johnson, in his Dictionary, does not notice this use of *sore* for *much*, so common in our older writers; it occurs several times in the Psalms, and has no relation whatever to the substantive *sore* painful, but is like the Scotch

word *sair*, derived from the German *seher*, much. Dr. Johnson quotes the psalm in his Dictionary conceiving it then derived from *sore*, painful.

I always consider the Merchant of Venice as concluding with the punishment of Shylock in the fourth Act; and a finer catastrophe does not occur in any drama, ancient or modern. The fifth act may be considered as a light afterpiece; but it is an afterpiece by Shakespear, and in his best manner.

## AS YOU LIKE IT.

### ACT I. SCENE I.

*As I remember, Adam, it was on this fashion bequeathed me, by will, &c.]* Considering the inaccuracy of construction so frequent in Shakespear, I think Dr. Johnson's explanation right. If a charge were necessary I would propose for—“*charged my brother on his blessing,*” and “*my brother charged on his blessing.*”

*Comes nearer to his reverence.]* Without enquiring whether Warburton is right in his emendation, or Henley in his explanation of this passage, it seems not easily to be accounted for, why Oliver, after the very sharp language already given him by Orlando, should take this as so great an insult as immediately to proceed to personal violence.

Oliver.—*Wilt thou lay hands on me, villain?*

Orlando.—*I am no villain.]* “The word villain is used by the elder brother, in its present meaning, for a worthless, wicked, or bloody man; by Orlando, in its original signification, for a fellow of base extraction.”—JOHNSON. I think that in the reply of Orlando the word villain is used in the same sense as in the insult of Oliver.

### ACT I. SCENE II.

*See this broken music in his sides.]* The expression is not very correct, but the meaning is obvious. Mr. M. Mason is so generally in the right that it is really surprising he should make the following remark:—“This probably alludes to the pipe of Pan, which, consisting of reeds of unequal length and gradually lessening, bore some resemblance to the ribs of a man.

### ACT I. SCENE III.

*And thou shalt show more bright and seem more virtuous*

*When she is gone.]* “When she was alone

she would be more noted."—JOHNSON. Surely this passage did not require a note; but we have here one that misleads us. Frederick does not mean merely to tell his daughter that she would be more noted when alone, but when a more accomplished and popular companion, or, as he hints, rival, was removed.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Needless stream.]* "The stream that wanted not a supply of moisture."—STEEVENS. I should think the critic might have supposed the following words of the poet, a sufficient elucidation of this *difficult* passage—

—“Thou mak’st a testament,  
As worldlings do, giving thy sum of more  
To that which had too much.”

## ACT II. SCENE IV.

*O Jupiter! how weary are my spirits.]* “She invokes Jupiter because he was supposed to be always in good humour; a jovial man was

a common phrase in our author's time.'—STEVENS. Jovial for jolly is now, I believe, no very uncommon phrase; but where the critic learned that Jupiter was supposed to be always in good humour I do not know. Neither would this be more implied from the passage in question, more than it would that the devil was a merry fellow, from a mere saying, O the devil ! how dull I am !

*But as all is mortal in nature so is all nature in love mortal in folly.]* “This expression I do not well understand. In the middle counties *mortal* from *mort*, a great quantity, is used as a particle of amplification, as mortal tall, mortal little. Of this sense I believe Shakespear takes advantage to produce one of his darling equivocations; thus the meaning will be, ‘So is all nature in love mortal in folly.’—JOHNSON. I perfectly agree with Dr. Johnson in his explanation of this obscure passage, but I believe he is wrong as to the derivation of *mortal* from *mort*. Dr. Johnson has *mort* for *much* in his Dictionary, and gives its etymology from *morght* islandic. Gross, in his dictionary of Provincial expressions, refers it to the county of

Kent. The only part of England where I have ever heard *mort* used for a great quantity is the north of Bedfordshire. But mortal is used as a particle of amplification among the common people in every part of the south of England, and *deadly*, and even *dangerous*, have the same meaning. I heard a country fellow in Dorsetshire, describing a Swiss servant, say, *He has got a daingerous long tail.* I conceive *mort*, therefore, as the derivative, and not the root.

## ACT II. SCENE VII.

*Blow, blow thou winter wind, &c.]* The neglect of sense in a song is clearly as old as Shakespeare. There is such a wonderful carelessness of diction in all the songs inserted in his plays, that the commentators would certainly do better to leave them as they are, with all their imperfections on their heads, than to hunt after new readings, or (in the words of Johnson) “ Try by strong agitation to elicit sense where, as it never was, it never can be found.

## ACT III. SCENE II.

*Such a one is a natural philosopher.]* “The clown calls Corin a *natural philosopher*, because he reasons from his *observations on nature*.”—M. MASON. “A natural being, a common term for a fool. Johnson perhaps means to quibble on the word. He may, however, only mean that Corin is a self-taught philosopher, the pupil of nature.”—MALONE. How is it possible that, considering the speaker (Touchstone), Mr. Mason could have given such an explanation as he has, or Malone, after having clearly comprehended the poet’s meaning, could have added the conclusion of his note.

*It will be the earliest fruit in the country, for you’ll be rotten ere you be half ripe, and that’s the right virtue of the medlar.]* “Shakespear seems to have little knowledge in gardening. The medlar is one of the latest fruits, being uneatable till November.”—STEEVENS. Mr. Steevens has more knowledge in gardening than in criticism, or

it must have stared him in the face that there is no allusion to the season of the year in which the medlar ripens, but to its early progress to decay, in which it is proverbially so much earlier than other fruits that it even precedes its ripeness.

*A South Sea off discovery.]* Why this reading is adopted which is proposed by Warburton (of whom *once more only* in a subsequent note) I cannot conceive. Johnson properly vindicates the old reading in part of his note. The first part of it is very absurd; “Every delay, however short, is to me tedious and irksome as the longest voyage, as a voyage of discovery on the South Sea.”

### ACT III. SCENE III.

*I am not a slut, though, I thank the gods, I am foul.]* “By foul is meant coy or frowning.”—HANMER. I rather believe foul to be put for the rustic pronunciation of full. Audrey, supposing the clown to have spoken of her as a foul slut, says naturally enough, “I am not a slut, though

I thank the gods I am foul, i. e. full.' She was more likely to thank the gods for a belly full than for her being coy or frowning."—TYRWHIT. Mr. Malone confirms Mr. Tyrwhit's sagacious conjecture from finding in the first quarto, *foul*, spelt *full*.

Where Sir Thomas Hanmer ever found *foul* used for *coy* or *frowning*, remains to be shewn; for the absurdity of Tyrwhit's idea there wants a name. *Foul*, as is clearly proved, both by Ritson and Malone, is opposed to *fair*, and means *ugly*, with a little quibble on its now more usual meaning of *dirty*. For the opposition of *foul* to *fair*, besides the example brought by Malone from this play, we have one in *Macbeth*.—

"Fair is foul and foul is fair."

Even now *foul* is something opposed to *fair* when we speak of the weather.

#### ACT IV. SCENE I.

*And the foolish chroniclers of that age found it was Hero of Sestos.]* "Sir T. Hanmer reads,

coroners by the advice of some anonymous critic as Warburton hints.”—JOHNSON. “ Mr. Edwards proposes the same emendation, and supports it by a passage in Hamlet:—The coroner hath sat on her and finds it Christian burial. I believe, however, the old copy is right though found is undoubtedly used in its forensic sense.”

—MALONE. “ I am surprised that Sir Thomas Hanmer’s just and ingenious amendment should not be adopted as soon as suggested. The illusion is evidently to a coroner’s *inquest*, which Rosalind supposes to have sat on the body of Leander, who was drowned in crossing the Hellespont, and that *their* verdict was the cause of his death. The word *found* is the legal term on such occasions. We say that a *jury* found it lunacy or found it manslaughter, and the verdict is called the finding of the *jury*.”—M. MASON. I must think with Mr. Malone that the old copy is right; and for the very reasons given by Mr. M. Mason in support of the alteration, viz. because the illusion is to the coroner’s *inquest*, and because the *jury* found it lunacy or manslaughter

(*felo de se* would have been more in point), and because the verdict is called the finding of the *jury*. The chronoclers are here supposed to be the jury. Shakespear was too well versed in forensic terms to make \* Rosalind talk of the coroner finding a verdict though he chose to put it in the mouth of the grave-digger, who says it was found Ophelia drowned herself in her own defence, or, as it is *correctly* explained by his companion, *se offendendo*.

## ACT V. SCENE IV.

*[As those who fear they hope and know they fear.]*  
This is a very obscure line as to its construction, nor do I think much light is thrown on it by the alteration proposed by Warburton, Johnson, the author of the Revisal, Blackstone, Musgrave, or M. Mason. Henley's proposal of a colon after the first fear is judicious, which is adopted by

\* I do not mean to say that Rosalind would really be better acquainted with English law than the grave-digger, but if Shakespear chose she should use our law language, he would not make her do it absurdly.

Mr. Malone, who thinks (with which I entirely agree) that the meaning is, “*as those who fear, they*, even those very persons, entertain hopes that their fears will not be realized, and yet at the same time they very well *know* there is reason for their *fears*.

*Strange beasts.]* “What strange beasts? yet such as have a name in all languages? Noah’s ark is here alluded to, into which the clean beasts entered by sevens, and the unclean by *two*, male and female; it is plain then that Shakespear wrote ‘here come a pair of *unclean* beasts,’ which is highly humourous.”—WARBURTON. Why will any editor insert the folly of Warburton? From this moment I have done with him: censuring him is like censuring the wanderings of a maniac,

### EPILOGUE.

*Bush.]* “The practice of hanging out a bush is still observed in Warwickshire and the adjoining counties, at fairs, &c. by persons who sell ale at no other time; and hence, I suppose, the

Bush tavern at Bristol and other places."—RITSON. This is another instance of attributing customs common to the whole kingdom to particular counties. The Bush tavern at *Bristol* is a *happy* illustration as Bristol is *so near Warwickshire*, and wine is *only* sold at *that* tavern during fairs, &c. *Stains* and *Farnham* are two *other places* that are in the same predicament.

# ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Where an unclean mind carries virtuous qualities, these commendations go with pity, they are virtues and traitors too.]* “ By virtuous qualities are meant qualities of good breeding and erudition, in the same sense that the Italians say *qualità virtuosa*, and not moral ones. On this account it is she says, ‘ that in an ill mind those virtuous qualities are virtues and traitors too, i. e. the advantages of education enable an ill mind to go further in wickedness than it could have done without them.—WARBURTON. “ *Virtue* and *virtuous*, as I am told, still keep this signification in the north, and mean *ingenuity* and *ingenious*,”--

STEEVENS. I should not have brought forward the absurdity of Warburton again, had it not been for Steevens' favorite mode of accounting by provincial authority for this new meaning of virtue, where none is wanted. The passage means simply that where some virtuous qualities are found in a bad character (and where is the character so bad as not to possess some virtues?) these virtuous qualities are traitors, as betraying us into placing a confidence where we ought not to place it, and though we are compelled to commend these qualities, our commendation is tempered with pity, to see so many “mildew'd ears blasting their hopeful brethren.”

*'Tis the best brine a maiden can season her praise in.]* “To season has here a culinary sense, *to preserve by salting.*”—MALONE. Surely, this coarse and vulgar metaphor neither wanted nor merited a note.

*Farewell, pretty lady, you must hold up the credit of your father.]* “This passage has been passed over in silence by all the commentators, yet it is evidently defective. The only meaning

that the speech of Lafeu will bear as it now stands is this, that Helena, who was a young girl, ought to keep up the credit which her father had established, who was the best physician of the age, and she, by her answer, *O were that all?* seems to admit that it would be no difficult matter for her to do so. The absurdity of this is evident, and the words will admit of no other interpretation. Some attention, therefore, is necessary, and that which I propose is, to read *uphold*, instead of *must hold*, and then the meaning will be this:—Lafeu observing that Helena had shed a torrent of tears, which he and the countess both ascribe to her grief for her father, says, that she *upholds* the credit of her father, on this principle, that the surest proof that can be given of the merit of a person deceased are the lamentations of those who survive him. But Helena, who knows her own heart, wishes she had no other cause of grief except the loss of her father, whom she thinks no more of.”—M. MASON. I cannot see the necessity of the emendation proposed by Mr. Mason, or that the text need be altered at all.

By holding the *credit* of her father no reference may be intended to his medical abilities, but to his character as a good man, and in this light M. Mason himself sees it, as Lafeu cannot suppose Helena's torrent of tears only flow for her father, because he was an excellent physician. He may mean to say do not disgrace the memory of your father as a virtuous man, by actions unworthy of a virtuous woman. This seems to me so easy an interpretation of the words, that I should not put it hypothetically, were I perfectly clear that Lafeu does not allude to his medical skill, and his own knowledge that he had some specific for the cure of the king's disorder, which might be in the possession of his daughter. It must be remembered, after he has been told in this scene that Helena is daughter of Gerard de Narbon, and the king's disorder is spoken of, he again asks, *Was this gentlewoman the daughter of Gerard de Narbon?* and that after he has spoken the words which are the subject of the note (though, according to the editions, he enters in the next scene) his next speech is to tell the king (Act 2. Scene 1.) that

he had a young woman to introduce to him, who had the means of curing him.

*There shall your master have a thousand loves,  
A mother, and a mistress, and a friend.]*  
I am here glad to notice Warburton with approbation. I would certainly omit all that comes between these lines and *God send him well*. If the connection may be a little loose, we have many such faults as these in our poet; but neither he, nor any man in his senses, could have possibly written the intervening stuff.

### ACT I. SCENE III.

*Daughter and mother*

*So strive upon your pulse —*

*— now I see*

*The mystery of your loneliness, and find*

*Your salt tears head.]* When I read these lines without looking at the notes, and saw two marks of reference, I asked myself what could possibly be said on this passage, where sense is so plain, but on casting my eye down, I found we are obliged to Mr. Steevens for the information that

to *strive* is to contend, and to Dr. Johnson for telling us that *head* here means *source* or *fountain*, and to Mr. Tyrwhit for commending a certain Mr. Hall for making nonsense of part of it by substituting *lowliness* for *loneliness*. A person agitated, pale, and in tears, from hopeless love, might naturally enough seek solitude, but how loving a person greatly superior in rank should be a proof of lowliness is not very clear to me.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*I am Cressid's uncle.]* “I am like Pandarus.” —JOHNSON. If this explanation is not superfluous (which it must be to a reader of Shakespeare) it explains too little. Any person at all acquainted with the romance of the siege of Troy, will not require to be told the name of Cressid's uncle. The mere classical reader, if such a one can be supposed, will know nothing either of Cressida or her uncle Pandarus; in whom he will hardly recognize the

of Homer, or the hero whom Virgil thus apostrophises :

—Clarissme—

Pandare qui quondam jussus confundete foedas  
In medios telum torsisti primus Achivos.

*The greatest grace lending grace.]* “ I should have thought the repetition of *grace* to have been superfluous, if the *grace* of *grace* had not occurred in the speech with which the tragedy of Macbeth concludes.”—STEEVENS. Notwithstanding the authority of the poet in Macbeth, I should, as an editor, however unwilling to distrust the text in general, have omitted the first *grace* here, as the sense is much clearer without it, and it is a redundant syllable, entirely destroying the measure, a thing which very *seldom* occurs in Shakespeare's blank verse; *never*, I believe, in his rhymed verse.

ACT II. SCENE II.

*Tib's rush.]* Messrs. Steevens, Malone, Ritson, and M. Mason, give us much more learning about *Tib* and her *rush* than it is necessary to cite. But part of Sir John Hawkins's note

deserves observation. He says, "Richard Poore, Bishop of Salisbury, in his *Constitutions anni 1217*, forbids the putting of rush rings, or any other like matters, on women's fingers, in order to the debauching them more readily, and he insinuates as the reason of the prohibition, that there were some people weak enough to believe that what was thus done in jest, was a real marriage. But notwithstanding this censure, the practice was not abolished, for it is alluded to in a song written by Sir William D'Avenant, called the *Rivals*.

I'll crown thee with a garland of straw then,  
And I'll marry thee with a *rush ring*."

Now certainly the pious bishop was very right to give this admonition, if his flock thought the receiving a ring of itself constituted a legal marriage, as *rush rings* (the common manufactory of children in the country) were much more *come-at-able* than gold, or even brass ones. But he could also have told them, that a gold ring was equally inefficient *without* the legal ceremony,

and *with* the legal ceremony a rush ring would be as effectually binding as one made of adamant.\* The quotation from the mad song rather proves too much, as by coupling the *rush ring* with the *garland of straw*, they shew *both* in the same predicament, either to have been customary ornaments, or (as is really the case) the dreams of a lunatic.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*Your dolphin is not lustier.]* “ By dolphin is meant the heir apparent and the hope of the crown of France. His title is so translated in all the old books.”—STEEVENS. “ What Mr. Steevens observes is certainly true, and yet the additional word *your* induces me to think that by *dolphin* in the passage before us, the fish so called is meant.”—MALONE. “ In the colloquial language of Shakespear’s time. *your* was frequently

\* A friend of mine, who was married at Gretna Green, told me, that not finding the ring readily, the operator told him the key of the door would do as well.

employed as it is in this passage. So, in Hamlet, the grave-digger observes, ‘that *your* water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body.’—  
 STEEVENS. I have no doubt but that Steevens is right as being the word for the heir apparent of France. A Frenchman would say *your* or *our* dauphin, as we should say *your* or *our* prince. I do not exactly see the consistency of Mr. Malone’s observation, that what Steevens says is certainly true, with his subsequent dissent. And Steevens’s second note completely destroys the sense of the first, and confirms the dissent of Mr. Malone; for *your* water and *your* dead body, in the authority cited, mean water and dead bodies in general, not *this* water or *this* dead body.

—*Good alone*

*Is good without a name vileness is so.]* “Shakespear may mean that external circumstances have no power over the real nature of things. Good alone (by itself) without a name (without the addition of titles) is good. Vileness is so (is itself)” —  
 STEEVENS. “Steevens’s interpretation

of this passage is very near being right, but I think it should be pointed thus,

—Good alone

Is good—without a name vileness is so.

Meaning that good is good without any addition, and vileness would still be vileness, though we had no name to distinguish it by.”—M. MASON. Both Steevens and M. Mason seem to understand (what indeed could not be well understood) the real drift of this passage, but they are neither very happy in their illustration: *Vileness is so*, is very improperly explained by *vileness is itself*; neither is there any necessity for the change of punctuation suggested by M. Mason. Good, in itself, without addition of title, is *good*; vileness is *so* (i. e. is in the same predicament) is vileness in itself, without any addition of name or title. This seems the sense of the words taken together.

*Honor's born.]* “ Honor's born, child of honor. *Born* is here used as *bairne* still is in the north.”—HENLEY. Why this absurd observation? Is not honor's born exactly equivalent with born of

honor? Suppose it had been honor's first born, would there have been any difficulty? Dryden in his Virgil always translates *Nate Dea, goddess born.*

*Shall seem expedient on the now born brief.]* This line, and the attempted illustrations of Johnson, M. Mason, Steevens, Henley, and Malone, are to me equally unintelligible.

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*When thou canst get the ring upon my finger.]* “*When thou canst get the ring which is on my finger into thy possession.*” The Oxford editor, who took it in the other way, to signify when thou canst get it on upon my finger, very sagaciously alters it to, when thou canst get the ring *from* my finger.”—WARBURTON. “Dr. Warburton's explanation is confirmed uncontestedly by these lines in the fifth act, when Helena again repeats the substance of this letter.

—Here is the ring,  
And look you, here's your letter, this it says,  
*When from my finger you can get this ring.*”—MALONE.

Warburton is here (*mirabile dictu!*) right, and shews the same sense may be deduced, without the change proposed by the Oxford editor; but how the very words of the proposed change in a second recital of the letter, prove Warburton to be right in rejecting it, Mr. Malone would do well to explain.

## ACT III. SCENE VI.

*Leaguer.]* “Camp. They will not vouchsafe in their speeches or writings to use our ancient terms relative to matters of warre, but do call a camp by the Dutch name of legar, nor will they afford to say such a town is besieged, but that it is beleaguered. Sir John Smith's Discourses, 1590, fol. 2.”—*DOUCE.* This is really a very curious note. At present all our military terms are in French, and I imagined leaguer to be the original English word, and siege the adopted French term, but here is proof positive to the contrary.

*John Drum.]* Theobald has a long foolish dissertation here about Tom Drum and John

Drum. It is odd that neither he nor Malone should advert to its obvious allusion to the drum which Parolles is so anxious to recover, and to which Lafeu also alludes when he afterwards calls him Tom Drum.

*I would either have that drum or another, or hic jacet.]* “ i. e. *Here lies*, the usual beginnings of epitaphs. ‘ I would,’ says Parolles, ‘ either recover the drum I have lost, or another belonging to the enemy, or die in the attempt.”—MALONE. It is very kind in Mr. Malone to elucidate this *very obscure* passage, to explain the meaning of *Hic jacit* to those gentlemen who have forgotten their Latin, and to tell those who have never seen a tombstone that *here lies* is the usual beginning of an epitaph.

*Dilemmas.]* “ By this word Parolles is made to insinuate that he had several ways all equally certain of recovering his drum ; for a dilemma is an argument that concludes both ways.”—WARBURTON. “ I think that by penning down his dilemmas, Parolles means that he will pen down his plans on the one side, and the probable ob-

structions he was to meet with on the other."---  
M. MASON. At Warburton's note I am not surprised, it is exactly in his manner; but I am surprised that M. Mason should be more absurd than Warburton. Dilemma here means simply *difficulty*, a sense in which it is now frequently used in common discourse. Johnson, in his Dictionary (and he cites the authority of Pope for it), gives 'a difficult or doubtful choice,' as one of the senses of dilemma.

## ACT IV. SCENE III.

*The Count's a fool and full of gold,  
When he swears oaths, &c.]* Johnson thinks a line is lost here, and Steevens proposes golden *store* or *ore* to complete the rhyme; but I think Malone is right in supposing the beginning, like the conclusion, of the letter to be prose.

*He's a cat still.]* Johnson says, and defends his opinion in a subsequent note, that it means, "throw him how you will he lights on his legs." Steevens and Malone at some length give the

true sense, i. e. that Bertram having before said he hates Parolles as he does a cat, only tells us that he continues in the same opinion.

### ACT V. SCENE III.

*I will buy me a son-in-law in a fair and toll him for this, I will now of him.]* So in this edition; in that I first read, the first *him* was omitted as it is in the first folio. When I first read Shakespear I never thought of notes, neither did I find any difficulty here; I understood it in this sense—"I will buy me a son-in-law in a fair, and let this be sold, at the same time paying the toll for his being put up to sale," and in this opinion I still continue. By 31 Eliz. cap. 12, it is enacted that no horse can be put up to sale without his marks and colour being entered with the toll gatherer. This act was passed in 1589, and Malone fixes 1598 as the date of this play, and perhaps at that time this regulation might be a common subject of conversation..

*Faith, sir, he did love her, but how?]* "But how perhaps belongs to the king's speech. But

how? how I pray you? This suits better with the king's apparent impatience and solicitude for Helena."—MALONE. "Surely all transfer of the words is needless; Hamlet addresses such another flippant interrogatory to himself—"The mouse-trap." Marry how? Tropically."—STEEVENS. Steevens is surely in the right.

# TAMING OF THE SHREW.

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## INDUCTION. SCENE I.

*The Slies are no rogues.]* “ That is, vagrants no mean fellows, but gentlemen.”—JOHNSON. “ One Sly was a performer in the plays of Shakespear, as appears from the list of comedians prefixed to the folio 1623. This Sly is likewise mentioned in Heywood’s Actor’s Vindication, &c.”—STEEVENS. As these gentlemen think this *wonderful* passage worthy of a note. I will propose a various reading ; for Slies read Slys. *Sic corrige meo periculo.* Sly is a proper name.

*Third borough ; and in the next scene, Leet.]* We are much obliged to the critics for turning their comments into a law dictionary.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*He that runs fastest gets the ring.]* “ An allusion to the sport of running at the ring.”—  
DOUCE. I think not, and for two reasons : first because at that sport the prize is *not* given to the fastest runner ; and secondly, because the ring is not the prize any more than the wicket is at cricket.

## ACT I. SCENE II.

*What he 'leges in Latin.]* “ i. e. I suppose, what he alleges in Latin. Petruchio has just been speaking Italian to Hortensio, which Grumio mistakes for the other language.”—  
STEEVENS. To this sensible remark Mr. M. Mason objects with some petulance, because the characters are Italian, forgetting himself, as is retorted by Steevens, that these Italians are completely anglicized in the play.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Twangling Jack.]* “ Twangling Jack is mean paltry *lunatist*? ”—**MALONE**. “ I do not see with Mr. Malone that Twangling Jack means paltry *lunatist*, though it may paltry musician.”—**DOUCE**. Mr. Douce might have seen, I should think, that *lunatist* is a manifest error of the press for *lutist*, which the present editor would have done well to have corrected, and to have omitted Mr. Douce’s sage remark on it.

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*Old Pantaloone.]* “ The Old Cully in Italian farces.”—**JOHNSON**. The Pantaloone was not the cully, but the father of the young women in the Italian farces as he is in the English pantomimes. The name is too common to want explanation.

## ACT IV. SCENE II.

*To pass assurance of a dower in marriage.]* Here again we are obliged to Mr. Malone for supplying the want of a law dictionary.

*Tailor.]* “In our poet’s time, women’s gowns were usually made by men.”—STEEVENS. Yes, and much later. In Dryden’s Wild Gallant, Bibber offers to measure Isabella. This practice has been well altered; unluckily, in general, the alteration has been reversed, as in tyre women, midwives, &c.

The long dissertation of Hurd on the refined satire couched in the induction, as Shakespear calls it, is truly worthy of the Warburtonian school. To the number of similar stories may be added *The Sleeper awakened*, in the Arabian Nights.

## WINTER'S TALE.

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### ACT I. SCENE II.

*Meeting noses.]* “Dr. Thurlby reads *meting* noses, i. e. *measuring* noses.”---JOHNSON. Was it worth the trouble of Dr. Johnson to record the curious emendation?

*If I could example*

*Of thousands that had struck anointed kings.]*

“An allusion to the death of the Queen of Scots. This play was, therefore, written in King James’s time.”---BLACKSTONE. I by no means see the certainty, or even the probability of what Sir W. Blackstone asserts so roundly, any more than I am convinced by the introductory note of Walpole, that the Winter’s Tale is an historic play, and in reality a second part of Henry VIII. and that it was *certainly* intended as a compliment to Queen Elizabeth.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Land damn him.]* All the united efforts of Hanmer, Johnson, Steevens, and Malone, do not throw a gleam of light on this word; but the reading proposed by Farmer, *Laudanum him*, i. e. poison him by laudanum seems quite inadmissible.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*A mankind witch.]* “I shall offer an etymology of the adjective mankind, which may perhaps more fully explain it. Dr. Hickes's Anglo Saxon Grammar, p. 119. Ed. 1705, observes, ‘*Saxonice man est a mein quod Cimbricè est nocumentum, Francice, est nefas, scelus:*’ So that mankind may signify one of a wicked and pernicious nature, from the Saxon *man*, mischief, and from *kind*, nature.”---TOLLET. How could any man who walks about without a keeper, write such abominable stuff about an obvious and not uncommon epithet, which, as M. Mason says, “certainly means nothing more than masculine.”

*Baseness.]* “A base son was a common term in our author's time.”—MALONE. Is it very uncommon now?

## ACT III. SCENE II.

*The crown and comfort of my life.]* “The supreme blessing of my life.”—MALONE.

*Thou wouldest have poisoned good Camillo's honor*

*To have him kill a king.]* “How should Paulina know this? No one charged the king with this crime except himself, while Paulina was absent attending on Hermione. The poet seems to have forgotten this circumstance.”—MALONE. Considering the good terms on which Camillo must have been on with Paulina (for when Leontes gives Paulina to him for a wife in the last act, he hints at his regard for her), is it improbable that he should have seen her just before he went off with Polixenes. The critic may often say in the words of Pope :

“It is not Shakespear nods, but we that dream.”

## ACT IV. SCENE II.

*The red blood reigns in the winter's pale.]* “The meaning is, the red, the spring blood, now reigns over the parts lately under the dominion of winter. The English pale and the Irish pale were frequent expressions in Shakespear's time; and the words red and pale were chosen for the sake of the antithesis.”---FARMER. “Dr. Farmer is certainly right. I had offered this explanation to Dr. Johnson, who rejected it.”---STEEVENS. I think Dr. Johnson is certainly right in the rejection. The most obvious sense is always most likely to be that of Shakespear; and I will venture to say that nine out of ten of common readers would understand it as meaning the red blood of spring now, has dominion over the pale occasioned by the coldness of winter. It is true the construction is something harsh, but the other is full as much so; the making pale a substitute for paleness is no great liberty for our poet, especially in his songs. If it is not an error of the press, Dr.

Farmer saying it implies that the red blood of spring has dominion over, not in, the parts, &c. is a kind of tacit acknowledgment of this sense of the passage, especially when coupled with the remark, on the intended antithesis between red and pale.

## ACT IV. SCENE III.

*There is an art which in their piedness shares  
With great creating nature.]* “That is,” as Mr. T. Warton observes, “there is an art which can produce flowers with as great a variety of colors as nature herself.’ This art is pretended to be taught at the ends of some of the old books that treat of cookery, &c. but being utterly impracticable is not worth exemplification.”---STEEVENS. Surely there is no reference in the speech of Perdita, to the impracticable pretence of producing flowers by art to rival those of nature; but to the very common practice of producing by art particular varieties of color on flowers, especially carnations, for which prizes

are given at what are called florists' feasts in all parts of England, and which this passage shews was at least coeval with Shakespear. Steevens' subsequent note on Gilly Flowers is in his *first manner*.

*He has his health and ampler strength, indeed,  
Than most have of his age.]* This would imply that Polixenes though hearty was very old ; but it appears from a speech of Leontes in the first act, that he (and Polixenes was of the same age), could not then be above six or seven-and-twenty ; for he says, speaking of his son —

“Looking on the lines  
Of my boy's face methought I did recoil  
Twenty-three years — : ”

And as sixteen years elapse between the third and fourth acts, he must be under forty-five at this time. But it is a common fault in the comic drama to give the fathers of the young characters the costume of grandfathers. I do not remember to have heard this remark made by any one ; but, what is singular, it struck every body in the excellent picture of the Angry Father, by

Opie in this year's (1804) exhibition. This cannot be accounted for from the observation of Horace—

“ Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidilibus.”

Since no imitation is so faithfully submitted to the eye as in the drama.

*Placket.]* “ Placket is properly the opening in a woman's petticoat.”---STEEVENS. Where did Steevens learn this? Placket is an old word for petticoat, and the opening was called the Placket-hole.

# COMEDY OF ERRORS.

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## ACT I. SCENE II.

*For she will score your fault upon my pate.]*  
“Perhaps before writing was a general accomplishment a kind of rough reckoning concerning wares issued out of a shop was kept by chalk or notches on a post.”—STEEVENS. There is really no reading such stuff as this with patience. Is not the word *score* as familiar now as *and* or *the*? Is there a door-post in London now without a *milk-score* in chalk on it?

## ACT IV. SCENE II.

*Stigmatical in making worse in mind.]* “That is marked or signalized by nature with deformity as a token of his vicious disposition.”—JOHNSON.

Surely no such meaning can be drawn from these words, which simply state that he was deformed in body, and more so in mind. In Henry VI. Part II. Clifford calls Richard Plantagenet foul *stigmatic*.

*Fairy.]* “*It is true that there is a species of malevolent and mischievous fairies.*”—T. WARTON. Is not this rather too positive an assertion? I confess I have my doubts as to this *fact*.

#### ACT V. SCENE I.

*And careful hours with time's deformed hand  
Have written strange defeatures in my face.]*

“Deformed for deforming.”—STEEVENS. “Defeature is the prevertive of feature. The meaning is, time hath cancelled my features”---JOHNSON. “Defeatures are undoings, miscarriages, misfortune from *defame*.”---STEEVENS. “Defeatures are certainly neither more nor less than features, as demerits are neither more nor less than merits.”---RITSON. It is strange these gentlemen, with the word *deformed* before their eyes, should be in doubt about the etymology of *defeature*. Johnson, in his Dictionary, does not agree with Ritson in the *certain* meaning of *demerit*.

# M A C B E T H.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Passim.]* The labors of the critics to explain the conversation of the witches and their profound investigation of the anile creed of the age of Shakespear reminds one of what Hotspur says of Glendower,

“ He held me but last night at least nine hours  
In reckoning up the several devils’ names.”

## ACT I. SCENE II.

*Bellona’s bridegroom.]* “ This passage may be added to the many others which shew how little Shakespear knew of antient mythology.” HENLEY. By Bellona Shakespear only means war personified, and Macbeth is called her bridegroom by the same figure that a lucky man may be said to be wedded to fortune. Surely Mr. Henley could not suppose that Shakespear meant Mars by Bellona’s bridegroom, and that he, like

Jupiter, was married to his own sister. *Till that Bellona's bridegroom* should be read with the emphasis on *that*, meaning till *that* bridegroom of Bellona, *ille sponsus Bellonæ*, not merely as a kind of expletive joined to till, as *usque dum*. To use his own words, this note may be added to the many others which prove how little Mr. Henley was qualified to explain Shakespear.

## ACT I. SCENE III.

*The Thane of Cawdor lives,*

*A prosperous gentleman.]* This is certainly a slip of the poet's memory, for in the preceding scene Ross informs the king that Cawdor was a traitor, in these words,

—Norway himself, with terrible numbers,  
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,  
The Thane of Cawdor, 'gan a dismal conflict,  
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapt in proof,  
Confronted him with self comparisons,  
Point against point rebellious.

In an anonymous note on the words *confronted him* in this passage, Mr. Nichols (for to him, according to the preface to this edition, anonymous notes are to be given) tries to vindicate the poet

from this charge. “ By *him* in this verse is meant Norway, as the plain construction of the English requires. And the assistance the Thane of Cawdor had given Norway was understood (which Ross and Angus indeed had discovered, but which was unknown to Macbeth) Cawdor being in the court all the while, as appears from Angus’s speech to Macbeth when he meets him to salute him with the title, and insinuates his crime to be lining the rebel with *hidden* help and vantage. That *him* applies to Norway, and not to Cawdor I perfectly allow, but *point rebellious* must only apply to the vassals of Cawdor, who assisted the enemy. That Ross and Angus should find out the treason of Cawdor on their way to court from the army (like some of the *supposes* in the Rehearsal) is much more improbable to be the intention of Shakespear, than that he should ~~have~~ been a little forgetful in the management of his fable, in which Virgil in his *Æneid* was in several places remarkably deficient. And if he left his *Æneid* without its last finish, which the high perfection of the verse renders incredible,

still no one will dispute its comparative correctness with the most finished work of Shakespear.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

### COURT WITHIN THE CASTLE.

“ The place is not marked in the old edition, nor is it easy to say where this encounter can be; it is not in the hall, as the editors have all supposed, for Banquo sees the sky ; it is not far from the bed chamber, as the conversation shews ; it *must be* in the inner court of the castle, which Banquo might properly cross in his way to bed.”—JOHNSON. Notwithstanding the *must be* of Dr. Johnson, I see no reason to deviate from all the editors, unless we were certain the hall of Macbeth had no window in it.

*Offices.]* “ Offices are the rooms appropriated to servants and culinary purposes : Duncan was pleased with his entertainment, and dispensed his bounty to those who had prepared it. All the modern editors have transferred this largess to the officers of Macbeth, who would more properly have been rewarded in the field, or at their return

to court."—STEEVENS. It surely is more natural to mention the largess as sent to the persons than to the places where they performed their work. Officer may be well applied to the upper servant of a feudal lord, and is by no means appropriated exclusively to a military leader.

*Ravishing strides.]* "A ravishing stride is an action of violence, impetuosity, and tumult, like that of a savage rushing on his prey; whereas the poet is here attempting to exhibit an image of *secrecy and caution.*"—JOHNSON. Steevens has so clearly proved that a long stride is what every person would take who wished to tread with *secrecy and caution*, that an editor who wished to admit no more notes than were necessary, would have done well to have omitted Johnson's note entirely.

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*Making the green—one red.]* How could the editor insert this foolish affected punctuation in his text, and at the same time give this unanswerable confutation of it at the foot of the page.

“ The line before us, on the suggestion of the ingenious author of the Gray’s Inn Journal, has been printed in some late editions as *above*. Every part of this line, as it is thus regulated, appears to me exceptionable. *One red* does not sound to my ear as the phraseology of the age of Elizabeth, and the *green* for the *green one*, or for the *green sea*, is, I am persuaded, unexampled. The quaintness introduced by such a regulation is of an entirely different colour from the quaintnesses of Shakespear. He would have here written, I have no doubt, ‘ Making the green *sea* red,’ if he had not used the word *seas* in the preceding line, which forced him to employ another word here.”—MALONE. This reading is, I believe, now established on the stage, but whenever the author of these observations is at the theatre, it is always received with *one hiss* at least.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*The murderer’s shaft that shot  
Hath not yet lighted.]* “ The design to fix the murder upon some innocent person has not yet

taken effect."—JOHNSON. Out of regard to the character of Dr. Johnson and the patience of his readers, the editor should have suppressed this strange misapprehension of the passage, which obviously means as is explained at some length by Steevens. The shaft has not yet done all its intended mischief; I and my brother are yet to be destroyed before it will light on the ground and do no more harm.

### ACT II. SCENE IV.

*A mousing owl.]* "i. e. An owl that was hunting for mice as her proper prey."—WHALLEY !! †

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*We'll take to-morrow.]* What could induce Mr. Malone to puzzle at this common expression, or Mr. Steevens to write a long note to shew the proper sense of it?

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*Shard-borne beetle]* "The shard-borne beetle is the beetle borne along the air by its shards or

scaly wings. In Cymbeline Shakespear again applies this epithet to the beetle.

—We find  
The sharded beetle in a safer hold  
Than is the full-winged eagle.”—STEEVENS.

This is sufficient. A great deal of what Steevens adds is superfluous, but all that is said by Warburton, Tollett, and Ritson, is ridiculous, and should have been omitted. We are, however, obliged to Mr. Holt White for telling us that the chaffer and the beetle are distinct insects.

### ACT III. SCENE III.

*Lated traveller.]* “ i. e. Belated, benighted.”  
—STEEVENS ! !

### ACT III. SCENE IV.

*Who may I rather challenge for unkindness,  
Than pity for mischance.]* In confutation of a very sensible remark of Malone and Wheatley, Douce gives us the proof of his total inability to comprehend what one would think could not

possibly be misunderstood. “ Macbeth means to say I have more cause to accuse him of unkindness for his absence than to pity him for any accident or mischance that may have occasioned it.”

—DOUCE. *May* obviously here implies a *wish*, not an assertion. *May* is not an awkward inversion of *I may*, but the regular optative.

*The table's full.]* We have seen the ghost of Banquo dismissed by Mr. Kemble on the authority of a passage in Lloyd's Actor. Why, in a play full of supernatural persons, the ghost of Banquo should alone be objected to is not very obvious, but it is sufficiently so from the context, that Shakespear meant the ghost should really appear to Macbeth, and not be merely the creation of his distempered conscience. The first observation that Macbeth makes is, that *the table's full*, that is, without discerning the person, he found no place reserved for him; for when Lenox says *there is a place reserv'd*, Macbeth answers *were?* and, on Lenox pointing to the place, and, saying here, my lord, he first sees the ghost and betrays his agitation. Besides we may take Macbeth's own word, he was

factly sensible that the dagger that seemed to lead him to Duncan was imaginary ; and when Lady Macbeth tells him here that the ghost was also the *painting of his fear*, as well as the *air-drawn dagger*, he is, being then fully collected, sensible of the difference, and answers firmly, *as I live I saw him.* Mr. Seymour here, not content with restoring the ghost of Banquo in the first apparition, contends that the second apparition was the ghost of Duncan : surely, without the least shadow of real support from the context. The ghost appearing immediately on Macbeth's wishing that his dear friend Banquo was present, would be a confirmation of its being his ghost, if any could possibly be necessary. Neither can I see any possible ground for the supposition of Mr. Seymour and his ingenious friend Mr. Strutt, that Banquo's ghost did not appear with the visionary kings, but should appear in another part of the stage of his own motive. The reason given for this is curious, viz. that Mr. Seymour "believes it was beyond the power of these weird women to disturb and conjure up the noble-minded Ban-

quo at their pleasure." I have read a long dissertation, I believe, in Glanville on Witches, where it is disputed whether the witch of Endor really raised the ghost of Saul, or a spirit in his form, but I did not expect to find such a conjuror in a critique on Shakespear.

*O proper stuffer.]* "This speech is rather too long for the circumstance in which it is spoken ; it had begun better at *Shame itself.*"—JOHNSON. This piece of intolerably false criticism is very justly refuted by M. Mason.

*Golden time.]* "Mr. M. Mason proposes to read the *golden time*, meaning the golden age ; but the ancient reading *may* be justified by Holingshead, who, speaking of the witches, says they resemble creatures of the elder world."---STEEVENS. Here again we have Steevens with his hypothetical defence of the old reading, which is obvious to every one, and a quotation to support it from Holingshead. Mr. M. Mason is generally right, but surely here his usual sagacity forsook him when he proposed to alter the text for the purpose of imputing murder to the golden age.

*Gentle weal.]* “The gentle weal is the peaceable community, the state made quiet safe by human statutes.”—JOHNSON. In my opinion it means that state of innocence which did not require the aid of human laws to render it quiet and secure.”—M. MASON. If the reading in the text is right Dr. Johnson’s explanation is the true one, M. Mason only follows up his former error; but I would adopt the more usual reading, *general weal*.

*A one of them.]* “This, however uncouth the phrase, signifies an individual.”—STEEVENS. This hardly needed explanation when *such a one* is so very common a phrase. The phrase is, however, uncouth here, and is a curious proof of the great attention our poet had paid to the correctness of his verse.

*Scann’d.]* “To scan is to examine nicely.”—STEEVENS.

#### ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Double double toil and trouble.]* “As this was a very extraordinary incantation they were to

*double* their pains about it. I think, therefore, it should be pointed as I have pointed it—

“ Double, double toil and trouble.”

Otherwise the solemnity is abated by the immediate recurrence of the rhyme.”—STEEVENS. If it were worth while to criticize so childish an observation, we could tell the critic that to double, double toil, would *quadruple* their pains.

*Though bladed corn be lodged.]* “ Corn prostrated by the wind in modern language is said to be laid, but lodged had anciently the same meaning.”—RITSON. *Lodge* is very generally used in this sense at present.

*The apparition of an armed head rises.]* “ The armed head represents symbolically Macbeth’s head cut off and brought to Malcolm by Macduff. The bloody child is Macduff untimely ripp’d from his mother’s womb. The child with a crown on his head and a bough in his hand is the royal Malcolm who ordered his soldiers to hew them down a bough and bear it before them to Dunsinane. This observation I have adopted from Mr. Upton;”—STEEVENS. This wonderful discovery must have

given “double double toil and trouble” to these sagacious critics. Surely it must be obvious to every child of common capacity the first time he reads the play.

*Blood-bolter'd.]* Steevens's note, tracing this obscure word to the neighbourhood of Stratford on Avon, exactly used in the sense it is here, is curious, and is a specimen of what notes *should be*, and a proper application of terms *really* provincial to the elucidation of Shakespear.

#### ACT IV. SCENE II.

*But cruel are the times when we are traitors*

*And do not know ourselves, when we hold rumour*

*From what we fear, yet know not what we fear.]*

“When we are led by our fears to believe every rumour of danger we hear ; yet are not conscious to ourselves of any crime for which we should be disturbed by those fears.”---STEEVENS. For this explanation of a very obscure passage, I am happy again to give my thanks to the critic. The emendation proposed by Oxford Editor of *know't ourselves* renders it plainer ; but considering the carelessness of the poet is not necessary

## ACT IV. SCENE III.

*Summer seeding.]* The old copy has, *summer seeming*. Summer seeming may signify lust as hot as summer." --STEEVENS. "Summer seeming is, I believe, the true reading. In Jones's Poems we have winter-seeming." --MALONE. With these observations of his own and Malone's, why would Steevens, alter the original text to insert the far-fetched and fanciful change proposed by Blackstone, and supported by Henley.

Macduff.—*See who comes here?*

Malcolm.—*My countryman; but yet I know him not.*] "Malcolm discovers Rosse to be his countryman by his dress. This circumstance loses its propriety on our stage as all the characters are uniformly represented in English habits." —STEEVENS. How could this remark get into an Edition published in 1797. The use of the Scottish dress in Macbeth was first introduced by Macklin about the year 1776, when he ventured to act that character, and the distinction has been ever since retained at both the theatres.

*Rent the air.]* “To rent is an ancient verb, which has long been disused.”—STEEVENS. Rather an error of the press for *rend*, or the poet put the past tense for the present, as to *clad* is sometimes incorrectly used for to *clothe*, an instance of which occurs in Mr. Drummond’s first edition of his *Persius*, and which was pointed out to him by the author of these remarks.

*He has no children.]* “It has been observed by an anonymous critic, that this is not said of Macbeth, who had children, but of Malcolm, who, having none, supposes a father can be so easily comforted.”—JOHNSON. “That Macbeth had children at some period appears from what Lady Macbeth says in the first act—I *have given suck*, &c. I am still more confirmed in thinking these words relate to Malcolm and not to Macbeth, because Macbeth had a son alive named Lulah, who, after his father’s death, was proclaimed king by some of his friends, and slain at Straithbolgie, about four months after the battle of Dunsinane. See Fordune.”—MALONE. Is it possible that any person can read the passage with its

context, and for a moment suppose it can relate to Malcolm and yet fancy himself a fit person to comment on the plays of our poet. Let him lay down his Shakespear and set about publishing a correct edition of Anderson's genealogical tables. Shakespear, in the ardor of composition, little thought of Lulah, or of what he had made Lady Macbeth say in a former scene. In a passage of Henry VI. Part III. (which Blackstone very properly observes, "contains the same sentiment as this, and may serve as a comment on it,") where Margaret says—

" You have no children, butchers, if ye had,  
The thought of them would have stirr'd up remorse."

Did Shakespear think it necessary to enquire if King Edward, Gloster, or Clarence, had then any children ?

## ACT V. SCENE III.

*My way of life*

*Is fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf.]* Though this passage and the proposed emendation of *may* for *way* has employed the pens of Johnson, War-

burton, Langton, Colman, Steevens, and Malone, the conclusion of the last mentioned gentleman's long note seems perfectly satisfactory. "Without going further into the subject it is sufficient for our purpose that the text, as it is exhibited in the ancient copy, affords an obvious easy sense without any emendation whatever."

When Steevens says immediately afterwards that *sear* is dry, he should have added that it is particularly applied to the autumnal leaves.

# KING JOHN.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Be thou as lightning in the eyes of France,*

*For ere thou canst report I will be there,*

*The thunder of my cannon shall be heard.]*

“The simile suits not well; the lightning, indeed, appears before the thunder is heard, but the lightning is destructive and the thunder is innocent.”

—JOHNSON. This note is followed by superfluous proofs of what is evident from Ritson and M. Mason, to shew that it is a common error that the thunder is destructive, and that this error has been adopted by the poets. But, in truth, the objection of Johnson, and the solution of the other gentlemen are equally superfluous. There is no allusion whatever to the destructive power of thunder; but King John merely adverts to the swiftness of the lightning at

first, and, having used the word, adds, “ As the lightning precedes the thunder, so you shall precede the thunder of my artillery.” Shakespear is shewn by Ritson to have imputed a destructive quality to thunder in several passages ; but this is certainly not one of them, for if it is, he must also impute a destructive quality to the report of the cannon, and not the ball.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Give grandam kingdom, and it grandam will*

*Give it a plum, &c.]* On this Mr. Seymour observes, “ This is still the language of nurses to children.” I did not imagine it had been of such high antiquity !

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*If not compleat, O say he is not she,*

*And she again wants nothing, to name want*

*If want it be not, that she is not he.]* I cannot but think these lines so disgraceful to a most beautiful passage, are the interpolation of some person who could not reconcile the dauphin, be-

ing complete with his being only the half part of a blessed man, and so inserted this stuff to make up the deficiency, whereas the word compleat is used here by no very uncommon irregularity of our poet for completely, the meaning of these lines—

“ Such is she in beauty, virtue, birth,  
Such is the dauphin, every way complete.  
He is the half part, &c.

Is, that the dauphin was as completely endowed with beauty, virtue, and birth, as the Lady Blanch ; but for both to be as completely happy as they are completely accomplished, they must each possess their counterpart in marriage.

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*Doff.]* “ To doff is to do off, to put off.”—  
STEEVENS. This observation of do off is so common a provincial barbarism now that it hardly merited the notice of Mr. Steevens. Dout is also used for *do*, or *put out*, and *don* is used for *put on* in one of the songs of Ophelia.

*Me thinks that Richard's pride, &c.]* The insertion of these spirited lines by Pope do as much honor to the taste of Pope as the rejection of them are disgraceful to the taste of Tyrwhit. They are so much in the spirit of Shakespear that it is a shame they should be rejected on the chronological authority produced by Steevens. Garrick, whose judgment with regard to Shakespear is worth that of a million such critics as Steevens, always spoke them, and with an energy that always met with loud applause.

*Untrimmed Bride.]* As, after all the controversial arguments of Steevens, Theobald, Warburton, Johnson, Collins, Tollet, and M. Mason, the ballance is so very even between *trimmed* and *untrimmed*, I must commend the editor for adhering to that reading, which Theobald tells us is sanctioned by all the copies.

*And shall these hands so lately purged in blood,  
So newly joined in love, so strong in both.]* “I believe the meaning is ‘love so strong in both parties.’”—JOHNSON. “Rather in hatred and in

love ; in deeds of *amity*, or *blood*.”—HENLEY.

I incline to the last opinion.

*For that which thou hast sworn to do amiss,  
Is not amiss when it is truely done.]* Warburton proposes to read, *is yet amiss* ; and, Johnson, *is't not amiss?* Ritson defends the old reading thus—“ Pandulph having conjured the king to perform his first vow to heaven to be champion of the church—tells him that what he has since sworn is sworn against himself, and therefore not to be performed by him ; for *that*, says he, which you have sworn to *do amiss* is *not amiss*, (i. e. becomes right) when it is done truely (that is, as he explains it, not done at all), and being *not done* when it would be a *sin* to *do it*, the truth is *most done* when you *do it not*.” I have no doubt of this being the true *import* (I will not venture to say *sense*) of this very absurd passage.

*Braying trumpets.]* “ Bray appears to have been particularly applied to express the grating sound of a trumpet.”—HOLT WHITE. In a book called the English Parnassus, by Poole, printed in

1657, braying is given as an epithet for a trumpet. It is used both by Gray and Mason, but possibly on the authority of Shakespear, to which the classical Gray has paid such deference as to falsify the quantity of *Hyperion*. Braying is applied to music in general, in *Timon of Athens*.

— When every room  
Has blaz'd with lights and bray'd with minstrelsy.

*Measures.]* This, we are told again, for about the twentieth time, by Malone, means a solemn dance ; as if it were not obvious to every reader that it means *generally* a dance. So Aristotle uses *Μετρὸν* and in Gray we have ‘*Frisking light in frolick measures.*’

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*Some airy devil hovers in the sky.]* Was there any occasion for Messrs. Percy and Henderson to display their demonological researches here ? Or if they thought there was, need they be inserted

in an edition that professes to select useful notes only.

*Philip make up.]* “Here the king, who had knighted him by the name of Sir Richard, calls him by his *former* name.”—STEEVENS. This is really a wonderful discovery of the critic, and he might have added, after *former*, the words *and real*.

*A whole armado.]* “This similitude, as little as it makes for the purpose in hand, was I do not question, a very taking one when the play was first represented, which was a winter or two after the Spanish invasion in 1588.”—WARBURTON. “The play, so far as I can discover, was not played till a long time after the defeat of the armado. The old play, I think, wants this simile. The commentator should not have affirmed what he can only guess.”—JOHNSON. Dr. Johnson should not, as a commentator, *guess*, as is implied by the word *I think*, where he might, by referring to the old play, have been able to *affirm*. Before he censured Warburton for *affirming*, he should, as a lexicographer, have known that *I do not question*

like *I dare say*) strong as the words *seem*, do really imply doubt; and as a common observer of what passes every day, he should have known that after eight years (for Malone gives this play as written in 1596) that event could not have become uninteresting, which is now highly interesting after the lapse of more than two centuries.

## ACT III. SCENE IV.

*Ten thousand wiry friends.]* “As the epithet *wiry* is here attributed to hair, so in another description the hair of Apollo supplies the office of *wire.*” [The critic should have told us where to find this other description.] “In the instructions to the commissioners for the choice of a wife for Prince Arthur, it is directed to note the eye-brows of the young Queen of Naples (who, after the death of Arthur was married to Henry VIII. and divorced by him for the sake of Anna Bulloyn), they answer ‘Her browes are of a browne heare very small, like a wyre of heare.’—HENLEY. This is the kind of note there is no reading with patience. First the fact is false: it was Catha-

rine of Arragon and not the Queen of Naples to whom Arthur and Henry VIII were successively married. Henry VII. wanted *himself* to marry the young Queen of Naples after Catharine was wedded to his son, as the very document quoted by the critic might have shewn him, for it commences ‘ Furst afstre the presentation and delyverance of suche lettres as they shall have with them to be delyvered to the said quenes from the Ladie Catheryn, Princesse of Wales, &c.’ To this must be added the gross blunder of confounding the single hair which was often compared by the poets of that age to a golden wire, with that wiry form of the eye-brow, which, together with red locks and high forehead, was esteemed beautiful by our barbarian ancestors.

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*By my Christendom.]* “ This word is used both here and in All’s well that Ends well for *baptism*, or rather the *baptismal name*.”—MALONE. Arthur does not mean to swear by his baptism, and still less by his baptismal name; but

by his faith in Christ his Christianity, for which Christendom is here used, as freedom for a state of liberty, and thraldom for a state of slavery.

*Mote.]* “Our author, who has borrowed so much from the scriptures, no doubt remembered, —‘ And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, &c.’ Matthew vii. 3.”—MALONE. It is, I think, more probable that our poet, as well as the translators of the bible, took a word then in common use.

#### ACT IV. SCENE II.

*From France to England.]* “The king asks how all goes in France; the messenger catches at the word goes, and answers that whatever is in France goes now to England.”—JOHNSON. This may be the meaning, but I have always understood it differently. This seems to me the sense of the passage. The king enquires about France; the messenger replies, turn your thoughts from France to England; for thither was the war now

transferred, which was the object of his enquiry, the French being already landed.

*Amazed.] "Stunned, confounded."*—STEEVENS. Is Mr. Steevens writing a dictionary?

*Standing on slippers which his eager haste  
Had falsely thrust upon contrary feet.]* Dr. Johnson remarks on this passage that Shakespear had forgotten that he was speaking of slippers and not of gloves. But many authorities are brought by Farmer, Steevens, Tollet, and Malone, to prove that in those times shoes and boots were made for the particular foot. This is the real and rational use of black-letter learning to illustrate Shakespear. This mode, however, is now revived.

#### ACT IV. SCENE III.

*Your sword is bright, Sir, put it up again.]* i. e. "Lest it should lose its brightness."—MALONE. I believe Mr. Malone thought of a similar passage in Othello——

*Put up your bright swords, or the dew will rust them."*

But even in this passage Othello is not really

anxious that the swords should not be rusted ; and still less is Falconbridge so here. Othello speaks it in a kind of angry contempt of those who drew their swords in a private broil, and Falconbridge means to say, in sovereign contempt to Salisbury, You have shewn us your sword is bright, and now you may put it up again, for you shall not use it.

*Do not prove me so,*

*Yet I am none.]* “ Do not make me a murderer by compelling me to kill you ; I am hitherto not a murderer.”—JOHNSON !! !

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*Away then with good courage, yet I know*

*Our party well may meet a prouder foe.]* “ Let us then away with courage ; yet I so well know the faintness of our party that I think it may easily happen that they shall encounter enemies who have more spirit than themselves.”—JOHNSON. One would think it impossible for any person to mistake so grossly the meaning

of these lines; but to see it done by such a man as Johnson really hurts one. Steevens gives the true and obvious meaning, prefacing it by saying, “Dr. Johnson is, *I believe* mistaken.”

### ACT V. SCENE II.

*Stranger march.]* “Our author often uses stranger as an adjective.”—MALONE. So does every author who writes in verse. It is, in fact, a Gallicism,

### ACT V. SCENE III.

*Sir Richard Falconbridge,]* “And yet the king a little while before (Act III. Scene II.) calls him by his original name, Philip.”—STEEVENS. If the reader will go back to the note on that place, it will also serve for one on this.

### ACT V. SCENE VII.

*The shrouds.]* “Shakespear here uses the word shrouds in its true sense. In modern poetry the word frequently signifies the sails

of a ship."—MALONE. "This latter use of the word shrouds, has hitherto escaped me."—STEEVENS. I believe Mr. Malone has confounded *shrouds* with *sheet*, which, though it means a *rope* is often mistaken by fresh-water sailors for the *sail*.

## KING RICHARD II.

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### ACT I. SCENE II.

*Caitiff.]* “Caitiff originally signified a *prisoner*, next a slave, from the condition of prisoners; then a scoundrel from the qualities of a slave.

Ἐμπονοῦ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀπειλήσας δέσμοις ἡμέρᾳ.

In this passage it partakes of all these significations.”—JOHNSON. “I do not believe that caitiff in our language ever signifies a prisoner. I take it to be derived not from *captif*, but from *chetif*, poor, miserable.”—TYRWHIT. Tyrwhit is undoubtedly right as to the *immediate* derivation; but *chetif* in French is derived from *cattiva* in Italian, which signifies, it is true, base, or mean; but it also signifies a *captive*, and therefore the

spirit of Johnson's note is right. Holt White observes, that "Johnson has compressed a couplet of Homer into a single line. To misquote a Greek poet without injury to the sense or the measure, is a strong proof of accuracy in the language." A member of the House of Commons, who was much in the habit of quoting the classics, has been suspected of studying changes of this kind beforehand, to shew his facility of composition. . Johnson was above such quackery.

## ACT I. SCENE III.

*Advised.]* "i. e., concerted, deliberated."—  
STEEVENS. This was hardly necessary to be told, as I suppose there are few persons who are ignorant of the words in which the royal assent is refused to a bill.

*Measure.]* "A measure was a formal court  
dance."—STEEVENS. *Ecce iterum Crispinus!*

## ACT I. SCENE IV.

*Had the tribute of his supple knee.]* "To illustrate this phrase it should be remembered, that

courtseying (the act of reverence now confined to women) was anciently practised by men."—STEEVENS. Though bowing and courtseying are now equally out of fashion, it may yet be full as easily remembered, that the bow taught by the dancing-master was always accompanied by a motion of the foot, which could not be performed without some degree of genuflexion.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Music at the close.]* "This I suppose to be a musical term."—STEEVENS !!!

*Rash.]* "That is, hasty, violent.—JOHNSON !!!

*Imp out our drooping country's broken wing.]* "When the wing feathers of a hawk were dropped, or forced out by any accident, it was usual to supply as many as were deficient: this was called to imp a hawk."—STEEVENS. This note is absolutely necessary to explain the metaphor to the generality of readers: it is exactly what a note on Shakespear should be. The same praise

may be given to all the notes which point out the real characters throughout the historical plays.

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*Dispark'd my parks.]* “To disspark is to throw down the hedges of an inclosure.”—STEEVENS. Where did Mr. Stevens pick up this curious piece of information? To disspark a park, is, to put it to some other use than that of keeping deer, whether the fences are thrown down or not. What it is may be seen around the houses of nine-tenths of the old country gentlemen of this kingdom.

## ACT III. SCENE II.

*And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower,  
Guard it, pray thee, with a lurking adder.]*  
“Guard it signifies here, as in many places, border it.”—MALONE. I very much doubt this signification here.

*The breath of worldly men cannot depose  
The deputy elected by the Lord.]* Both Johnson and Holt White have each a note

on this passage to say our poet was as likely to have picked up the sentiment of indefeasible right under Elizabeth as James. *Holt White* prefaches his note with these words—" Far be it from me to palliate the conduct of the wretched James." If it deserves palliation, shame on the time-serv- ing critic who shrinks from it! Since the revo- lution, the memory of the unfortunate princes o the house of Stuart has been persecuted with dis- gusting virulence.

*Bid time return,*

*And thou shalt have twelve thousand fighting men.]* " Salisbury says this to the king, speak- ing of the desertion of the Welch forces. On this the king looks pale, which Aumerle observ- ing, the king says,

" But now the blood of *twenty thousand* men  
Did triumph in my face, and they are fled."

I am surprised none of the critics have no- ticed the inconsistency of these two passages so near each other.

## ACT III. SCENE IV.

*Apricocks.]* I step a little out of my way to notice the ridiculous and a little old maidish custom which now prevails of calling and writing this fruit apricot; it used always to be pronounced and generally written apricock. The name in Persian, the language of its native country, is Bricoc, and hence it is called *bericocco* in Italian, and *albarcorco* in Spanish; whence, the Arabic article *al* being prefixed, are albricot and apricock derived. The Romans, who, like the ancient Greeks and modern French, naturalized all their names, called it *præcoccia*, and from them the later Greek writers Πραιώνια ) quasi *mala persica præcox*. Our apricot comprehends all the errors: the change from *k* to *t* of the French, and from *b* to *p* of the Latin, and the prefixed article of the Spanish.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*Rapier's point.]* Johnson and Read are at some pains to shew that the weapon was not in use till long after the time of Richard II. The word is,

however, used by the author of *Titus Andronicus*, which is a greater anachronism : the error, however, is justified by the stage practice. When Prince Henry and Hotspur fight on the stage with rapiers, there is no very glaring error in making Fitzwalter name a weapon which he would certainly have by his side if the play were now acted.

*I dare meet Surrey in a wilderness.]* We are much obliged to Dr. Johnson for telling us why he dared to meet Surrey, particularly in a wilderness; and for confirming the difficult elucidation by a quotation from *Macbeth*.

### ACT V. SCENE II.

*Amazed.]* “ i. e. perplexed, confounded.”—  
STEEVENS. Again!!! See the note on King John, Act IV. Scene II.

### ACT V. SCENE III.

*Speak it in French, king; say, Pardonnez moi.]*  
“ That is, excuse me, a phrase when any thing is civilly denied. The whole passage is such as I could well wish away.”—JOHNSON. Surely there

was no necessity for the explanation, but every one must join in the wish.

*Chopping French.]* *Chopping*, I suppose, here means *jabbering*, talking flippantly a language unintelligible to Englishmen ; or perhaps it may mean the French who clip and mutilate their words."—  
MALONE. *Chopping* means *changing*; it is commonly used in speaking of exchanging things by way of barter, but in vulgar discourse it is very usually applied to the wind: when the wind suddenly blows from an opposite quarter, it is said to have *chopped* about; and in this sense the Duchess of York may apply the word to the French expression of *Pardonnez moi*, which gives a directly opposite meaning to the English word *pardon*, in the way she wishes the king to speak it.

# HENRY IV. PART I.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Erimys.]* The substitution of this word for *entrance* (notwithstanding the bear-garden flourish of Mr. Stéevens, who concludes his note by throwing down the gauntlet of defiance in these words, *signa canant*, and the authority of Dr. Farmer (which is not so infallible with me as with him) without the sanction of any copy, is a bold effort of conjectural criticism. Neither do I see that it is justified by giving a much clearer sense than the old reading. After all the labours of the critics, this appears to me as one of the *loci desperati* of our poet.

*The sepulchre of Christ.]* “The lawfulness and justice of the holy wars have been much disputed;

but perhaps there is a principle on which the question may be easily determined. If it be part of the religion of the Mahometans to extirpate by the sword all other religions, it is, by the law of self-defence, lawful for men of every other religion, and for Christians among others, to make war upon Mahometans, simply as Mahometans; as men obliged by their own principles to make war upon Christians, and only lying in wait till opportunity shall promise them success."—JOHNSON. This note is worthy of its author, and is a proper answer to the stuff that has been written about the crusades by the modern historians. Nothing but the inveteracy of the feudal warriors of western Europe against the infidels could have preserved the world from the inundation of eastern barbarism. It was the policy of the leaders, both in church and state, to excite the religious enthusiasm of the times; but the desire to possess the sepulchre of Christ was no more the real cause of those wars, than madness was of the extravagances of the elder Brutus, or idleness and dissipation were of the wild freaks of Prince Henry.

## ACT I. SCENE II.

*Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?*] “The prince’s objection to the question seems to be, that Falstaff had asked in the night what was the time of the day.”—JOHNSON. It is very clear to me, that to ask what time of day it is, only means asking the hour, and is exactly equivalent with asking a person who was looking at a sundial, what it is o’clock; both justified by the “*jus et norma loquendi.*” The prince only means to ask what consequence it can be to so irregular a man as Falstaff to know the hour.

*All hallowen summer.]* “All hallows is All hallown-tide, or “All Saint’s Day, which is the first of November.” ANON. We are obliged to this gentleman for his curious piece of information, from which we are led to infer that All hallown Summer, must mean a series of fine weather in the beginning of November, which naturally induces one to think with STEEVENS, that ‘the poet’s allusion was designed to ridicule “an old man with youthful passions!!!”’

## ACT I. SCENE III.

*His chin, newreap'd,*

*Show'd like a stubble-land at harvest home.]*

“ That is a time of festivity.”—JOHNSON. This so obviously relates, as Mr. Tyrwhit justly observes to the smoothness of the field, and not the festivity of the time, that it required some degree of ingenuity to be able to deduce any other meaning from it; but this great man has, as a commentator, the wonderful capacity ascribed by Fielding to Parson Adams, of always taking the wrong track, where it is just possible for a human creature to mistake his way.”

*I'd have him poisoned in a pot of ale.]* “ Dr. Grey supposes this to be said in allusion to Caxton's account of King John's death; but *I rather think* it has reference to the low company, (drinkers of ale) with whom the prince spent so much of his time in the meanest taverns.” STEEVENS.

Here Mr. Steevens, as is his custom, hesitates when he is so obviously in the right, (that,

except his notes had been written on the same plan), he should not have noticed the very absurd supposition of Dr. Grey.

### ACT II. SCENE III.

*In faith, I'll break thy little finger, Harry.]*  
“ This token of amourous dalliance appeareth to be of very ancient date, being mentioned in Fenton's Tragical Discourses, 1579—‘ Wherupon I think no sorts of kisses or follies of love were forgotten, no kynde of crampe or pinching by little finger.’—HAMNER. A precious critic this, to discover that kissing and squeezing fingers were invented so early as 1579. But our bard, with his usual disregard to chronological accuracy, has introduced this naughty custom in the year 1403.

### ACT II. SCENE IV.

*Give him as much as will make him a royal man.]* I do not know which is most absurd, Johnson's telling us, with some doubt, that “ he believes a kind of jest is here intended;” or the

confirmation of his opinion by Tollet, who calls Tyrwhit "very learned and ingenious," for discovering that a royal was worth 10s. and a noble 6s. 8d.

*A march of twelve score.]* "It will kill him to march so far as twelve score yards."—JOHNSON. "Rather twelve score feet; the prince quibbles on the word foot, which signifies a measure and the infantry of an army. I cannot conceive why Johnson supposes that he means twelve score yards, he might as well extend it to twelve score miles."—M. MASON. "Dr. Johnson supposed that twelve score meant twelve score yards, because that was the common phraseology of the time. When archers talked of sending a shaft fourteen score, they meant fourteen score yards. I have, therefore, *great doubts* whether the equivoque pointed out by Mr. Mason was intended."—MALONE. "Twelve score *always* means so many yards, and not feet. There is not the smallest reason to suppose that Shakespear meant any quibble."—DOUCE. Dr. Johnson is right; so clearly so, that he justly thought it unnecessary to

give his reasons. M. Mason's note, contrary to his usual custom, betrays positiveness, pertness, and ignorance of the subject. Malone is in the right, but, like Steevens, does not seem sure of it. Douce speaks as a critic ought to speak when he feels that he understands what he is writing about.

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*Tell truth and shame the devil.]* “ Speak the truth and shame the devil *was* proverbial. See Ray's Proverbs, 163.”—REED. To quote Ray to prove that a phrase, now in very common use, *was formerly* proverbial, is an absurdity that I should have laughed at, where I not hurt to see it from the pen of a person so truly respectable as Mr. Reed.

*And gave the tongue a helpful ornament.]* “ The English language.”—JOHNSON. “ Glendower means that he graced his own tongue with the art of singing.”—RITSON. “ I think Dr. Johnson's explanation is the true one.”—MALONE. I think they are both mistaken and that Glendower suggests that by writing

verse he had improved his style. Hotspur's answer is levelled at verse not at music or speaking English.

*One, no persuasion can do good upon.]* “A common ellipsis for ‘one that no persuasion, &c.’”—STEEVENS. So common, surely, that it needed not a note.

*I understand thy kisses and thou mine,*

*And that's a feeling disputation.]* i. e. “A contest of sensibility, a reciprocation in which we engage on equal terms.”—STEEVENS. What makes this critic so unseasonably delicate on a sudden? I doubt if the use of *feeling* for sensibility is as old as the age of Elizabeth. The latter part of the note, or at least its application to this passage, I do not comprehend.

*Be still.—*

*Neither, tis a woman's fault.]* “This is spoken ironically.”---FARMER. This is so obvious that I should have marked the elucidation with my usual signs of admiration; did not the extreme absurdity of the other critics make it necessary. Johnson says he does not understand it. Steevens

gives such a meaning as no one but himself could have given, and the sagacious and modest Mr. White has found out that it is baudy.

*Tis the next way to turn tailor.]* This passage is to me inexplicable, even after all the learning of Johnson, Steevens, Malone, and my old friend Dains Barrington. By the way all the critics suppose Percy is *dissuading his wife from singing*, when he is really *persuading her to sing*.

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*Lord Mortimer of Scotland.]* Steevens's note on this is curious and satisfactory.

### ACT III. SCENE III.

*Yea two and two, Newgate fashion.]* "As prisoners are conveyed to Newgate two and two together."—JOHNSON!

*Stew'd Prunes.]* Mr. Steevens, as Dr. Farmer observes, has indeed fully discussed the subject of stew'd prunes. Much of his learning on this beastly subject might have been spared.

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*His beaver on.]* Warburton proposes beaver up, which produces much altercation among the other critics. Shakespear clearly means when he uses the expression ‘the beaver up,’ that the face is uncovered, as in the passage in Henry IV. Part 2, —

“ Their armed staves in charge, their beavers down.”

And in Hamlet, when Horatio tells Hamlet that his father’s ghost was armed cap-a-pe, he says, “ Then saw you not his face?” To which his friend replies, “ O yes, my lord, he wore his beaver up.” But Douce is certainly right in saying the beaver sometimes was fixed to the bottom and sometimes to the top of the helmet; for, in a note on Mr. Macauley’s History of England, vol. 3, p. 437, chap. 5, 4to. Lord Broke’s being killed is mentioned as extraordinary because his beaver was *up* and he was armed to the knee.

## ACT V. SCENE III.

*Shot-free.]* “A play upon *shot*, as it means the part of a reckoning, and a *missive weapon discharged from artillery*.”—JOHNSON. Was it worth while to explain this very obvious pun. The concluding diffinition of shot almost rivals the celebrated explanations (if they may be called so) of *network* and *shooing horn*, in the dictionary.

*Here's that will sack a city.]* “A quibble on the word *sack*.”—JOHNSON. Again !!!

## ACT V. SCENE IV.

*Amaze your friends.]* i. e. “Throw them into consternation.”—STEEVENS. The critic is never tired of explaining this word.

*Ill weaved ambition how much art thou shrunk.]* “A metaphor taken from cloth which shrinks when it is ill-weaved, when its texture is loose.” JOHNSON !!!

*But let my favors hide thy mangled face.]* “We should read *favor*, face, or countenance. He is

stooping down to kiss Hotspur."---WARBURTON.  
The proposed emendation and the supposition on  
which it is grounded are so completely absurd  
that I cannot avoid noticing it, though it comes  
from Warburton.

*Powder me.] To powder is to salt.*"---JOHN-  
SON !!!

# HENRY IV. PART II.

---

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*And darkness be the burier of the dead.]* Considering how often the commentators on Shakespeare step out of their way, one of them I think might have remarked (considering how very popular Cibber's alteration of Richard the Third is), that this, and some of the preceding lines, are given there as the dying words of Richard.

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*Kin to the king.]* This is a curious circumstance, and deserves notice more than a thousand of the trifles enlarged on by the critics. It shews that from the princes of the blood marrying the heiresses of great families, it was no uncommon thing for persons of inferior rank to be related to the royal family.

*Put on two leathern jerkins and aprons and let us wait on him at his table as drawers.]* To this Dr. Johnson objects as being unlikely to succeed. Mason defends the possibility of it. Malone enforces Johnson's objection, and at the same time defends the propriety of Shakespear in making Falstaff discover the prince as soon as he speaks. But what is the use of all this? Does not the drama claim now, and has not it always claimed the privilege of making characters the most intimately connected be disguised from each other through a whole play. Of this Rosalind (taking in the circumstance of Orlando courting her by her own name in jest, and even acknowledging that he traces a strong resemblance) is an example of the highest degree of improbability, and yet I have never heard it objected to by the most fastidious critic.

## ACT II. SCENE. IV.

*Good year.]* This is the third or fourth time that the critics investigate the beastly etymology of this foolish phrase.

*Swaggerer.]* “A swaggerer was a roaring, bullying, blustering, *fighting* fellow.—RITSON. I believe no one will dispute the truth, whatever they may the necessity, of this explanation, except as to the fighting, a character seldom given either to the bully or the swaggerer.

*Tame cheater.]* A gamester and a cheater were, in Shakespear’s time, synonymous terms.”---ANONYMOUS. Is the case very different at present?

*Do not speak like a Death’s head.]* “It was the custom for the bawds of that age to wear a death’s head in a ring, very probably with the common motto, *memento mori.*” --- STEEVENS. The allusion, as Ritson justly observes, was to the common ornament on hatchments and grave-stones. But suppose it wree to a mourning ring, no critic upon earth but such a one as Steevens could have suggested that they were more worn by bawds than other persons, in that age or any other.

*Tewksbury mustard.]* “Tewksbury is a market town in the county of Gloucester, formerly noted for mustard balls made there, and sent into other parts.”---GREY. Ha! ha! ha!

*A bastard son of the kings.]* “The improbability of this scene is scarcely balanced by the humour.”—JOHNSON. This has been already noticed in a former note; but as it happens there is no improbability at all here, Falstaff is so taken up with his mistress that nothing is so probable as that he should not cast his eye towards the waters at all; and the moment the prince speaks he discovers him. Perhaps of the thousand instances of disguised characters in the drama, this is the only one free from the least shadow of improbability.

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*Swinge buckler.]* “Swinge bucklers and swash bucklers were words implying rakes or rioters in the time of Shakespear.” STEEVENS. In Dryden’s comedy of Sir Martin Marall, Moody, an old foolish country gentleman, who is always praising the age of Elizabeth, is called the Swash Buckler in the *dramatis personæ*.

*Crack.]* “This is an Icelandic word, signifying a boy or child. One of the fabulous kings and

heroes of Denmark called Hrolf, was surnamed Krake."—TYRWHIT. Is it conceivable that a man of sense could have written this piece of stupid pedantry ?

*Twelve score.]* This is again a stumbling-block to the critics, who shew their complete ignorance of archery. Douce says very properly that it was not extraordinary for an excellent archer to shoot fourteen score and a half. But he is grossly wrong when he adds that it must be allowed that none but a most extraordinary archer would be able to *hit a mark* at twelve score. A commentator on Shakespear ought to have known so much of the age he lived in as not to be told that if an archer did not hit a mark at twelve score yards distance, he never could hit it at all ; for by the statute 33 Henry VIII. Ch. 9. every person turned of 17 years of age, who shoots at a less distance than twelve score is to forfeit six shillings and eight-pence. A penalty by the way which is incurred by all the archers of the present day, as the statute is not only unrepealed, but is, as far as it prohibits some kind of gaming now

frequently put in force. For we have a number of shadows to fill up the muster book) “ That is, we have in the muster book ; many names for which we receive pay, though we have not the men.”—JOHNSON!!!!

*Bona roba.]* “ A fine shewy wanton.”—JOHNSON. As this has been already explained by STEEVENS in this scene, the editor might have omitted this note.

#### ACT IV. SCENE II.

*Heaven, and not we, hath safely fought to day.]* “ The ascribing thus the success of the treachery to the influence of Heaven ; however, it may shock the mere moralist, is justly pious and orthodox.”—SEYMOUR. This is not the only instance Mr. Seymour gives of his respect for christianity.

#### ACT IV. SCENE IV.

*The seasons change their manners, as the year  
Had found some months asleep, and leap'd them over.* On this Mr. Malone observes, that “ in the second line our author seems to have been thinking of

leap year."—HENLEY!! Could any man of common sense make so absurd a remark?

### ACT V. SCENE I.

*William Cook.]* “It appears from this instance as well as many others, that anciently the lower orders of people had no surnames.”—STEEVENS. By the same rule it equally appears they have none now. Did the learned gentleman never hear of John Ostler, Will Boots, Jenny Kitchen, and Molly Landry. The truth is, he wanted to say something about the *cook* of *William Canyng* the *Royal Merchant* of Bristol, and he wrote this foolish note to introduce it. The fact was once as he states it, but not in the time of Shakespear any more than now. By the way is it not absurd to spell the name of the person, whose sole employment is to tend horses, and who is always called *Horseler, Ostler*; a word corrupted from *Hostelier*—Innkeeper.

### ACT V. SCENE V.

I think Dr. Johnson’s remark on the poet’s neglect of Poins very just. He is clearly distin-

guished from the other loose companions of the Prince. In the Merry Wives of Windsor, Fenton the fine gentleman of the play, is mentioned, as being a companion of the Prince, and Poins. Mr. Morgan, in his ingenious Essay on the Character of Falstaff, has been very severe on the characters of Poins, I know not why.

*I heard a bird so sing.]* “This phrase which I suppose to be proverbial, &c.”—STEEVENS. What a wonderful supposition !!

# HENRY V.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Scambling.]* What a long note has Steevens written on this common word.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Sworn brothers.]* In the two last plays there are two notes on this colloquial phrase by Steevens, tracing it to the *fratres junti* of chivalry, and now Mr. Whalley treats us with a third. Two of the three might certainly have been spared in an edition that professes compression.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*Let me bring thee as far as Stains.]* i. e. “ Let me attend or accompany thee.”—REED. The expression and the custom are now very common in North Wales.

## ACT III. SCENE II.

*Be merciful great Duke.]* “ That is great commander. The Trojan Duke is only a translation of Dux Trojanus. So also in many of our old poems, Duke Theseus, Duke Hannibal, &c. In Pistol’s mouth, the word has here peculiar propriety.”—MALONE. To what poem does the Trojan Duke here relate? And why is the word duke peculiarly proper in the mouth of Pistol. Shakespear never uses duke for leader, though he gives Theseus the title of Duke of Athens; not as a leader, but as a sovereign prince, like the Duke of Brunswick, which was a common error of the time. The observation that duke was used by our early poets, for leader from dux is generally just, but I think it is not so used in this place, as congenial with the pompous style of

Pistol. I am inclined to think the idea of the Duke of Gloucester, who is said to have the management of the mines, struck the poet. In the first Chapter of Chronicles, the chief magistrate of Edom, who is called in Hebrew, by a name usually translated prince or chief, in Greek by Ἡγέμων and in the vulgate by dux, is rendered duke in our translation of the bible.

*The adversary has digged himself four yards under the countermines.]* “ Fluellen means the enemy had digged himself countermines, four yards under the mines.”—JOHNSON. I do not see why Dr. Johnson should suppose Fluellen to mean, the reverse of what he says. The mines were under the breach to blow up the assailants, under these the English had countermined, and beneath these countermines the enemy had digged himself four yards.

*I think a will plow up all.]* “ That is he will blow up all.”—JOHNSON. Considering the immediate context, and the words, plood and preaches, utter'd by Fluellen, just before, this piece of information might have been spared.

## ACT III. SCENE V.

*Pennons.]* “Pennons armonial, were small flags on which the arms, device, and motto, of a knight were painted.”

“Pennon is the same as pendant.”—STEEVENS.  
The first note, though it is not distinguished by any name cannot belong to *Steevens*, because it is as perfectly right as the other is erroneous. A pennon is a long painted flag carried before a knight or an esquire, a pendant, or more properly pennant, is a naval flag of the same shape, usually carried by a commodore. A banneret was created by cutting of the point of the pennon, and making it a banner, which was peculiar to the nobility, and from this, and not from the ceremony being performed under the royal standard is the title derived. It is therefore clear, that the honor could not be conferred now, even if the king were present, for the materials for it are wanting in a modern army.

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*That we should dress us fairly for our end.]*  
“Dress us I believe, means here address us, i. e. prepare ourselves.”—MALONE. Dress in its common acceptation may be the true reading.”—STEEVENS. Though I perfectly agree with Malone, those who contend for the learning of Shakespear may produce a passage from Xenophon, in favor of the supposition of Steevens, who says in his Anabasis, that on preparing for a very dangerous enterprize, he dressed himself in his most splendid habit, as proper for the celebration either of his triumph, or his funeral.

*It sorts well with your fierceness.]* i. e. “It agrees.”—STEEVENS !!!

## ACT IV. SCENE II.

*Dout.]* Mr. Steevens here thanks his late friend, the Rev. H. Horner for informing him “that *dout* is still used in Warwickshire, for *do out*, or extinguish.” Will there be no end of this

stupid pedantry, it is still current in the vulgar dialect of the whole kingdom. Besides Mr. Steevens might as well have referred us to his note on *doff* in King John, Act III. Scene I. I will now turn to *don*, in Hamlet. Yes, here we have it again. “To *don* is to *do on*, as *doff* is to *do off*, put off.”—STEEVENS. This repetition is very edifying, especially in an edition that professes to reject superfluous notes.”

## ACT IV. SCENE II.

*Vigil.]* i. e. “The evening before this festival.”  
—STEEVENS!!!

*And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by  
From this day to the ending of the world,  
But we in it shall be remembered.]* “It may be observed that we are apt to promise to ourselves a more lasting memory than the changing state of human things admits. This prediction is not verified; the feast of Crispin passes by without any mention of Agincourt. Late events obliterate the former: the civil wars have left in the

nation scarcely any tradition of more ancient history."—JOHNSON. The only part of this note that is not grossly untrue, is, that the anniversary of the battle of Agincourt is not observed. While Shakespear's plays are popular, can it be said that the nation has scarcely any tradition remaining of more ancient history than the civil wars of the last century. Ask any man of common sense and observation (Dr. Johnson, with all his great talents, was neither), which are now most popular, both in writing and conversation, the battles of Creci, Poitiers, and Agincourt, or Edgehill, Naseby, and Marston Moor.

*We are but soldiers for the working day.]* "We are soldiers but coarsely dressed, we have not on our holyday apparel."—JOHNSON. !!!

#### ACT IV. SCENE IV.

*O, Signieur Dew should be a gentleman.]* "I cannot help thinking that Shakespear intended here a stroke at a passage in a famous old book, called *The Gentleman's Academy in Hawking and Armorie*, written originally by Juliana Barnes,

and republished by Gervase Markham, 1595. The first chapter of the book of Armorie is, ‘ the Difference ’twixt Churles and Gentlemen,’ and it ends thus—‘ From the offspring of gentlemanly Japhat, came Abraham, Moyses, Aaron, and the prophets, and also the kings of the right line of Mary, of whom the only absolute gentleman, Jesus, was borne—gentleman by his mother Mary, princesse of coat armour.’—FARMER. If Dr. Farmer chose to treat his readers with this stupid piece of profaneness, he should not have made Shakespear *particeps criminis*; for there surely is no shadow of such an allusion in this mistake, so very natural in such a character as Pistol.

## ACT IV. SCENE VIII.

*There are but sixteen hundred mercenaries.]*  
“ Mercenaries are, in this place, common soldiers, or hired soldiers; the gentlemen served at their own charge, in consequence of their tenures.”—JOHNSON. I believe Dr. Johnson right, notwithstanding the objection of Mr. Ritson, that the custom of knight’s service had fallen into disuse

before the time of Henry V. Shakespear was no nice observer of this kind of propriety. It is remarkable that the word soldier itself, though now so honorable, is in its derivation equivalent with mercenary.

# HENRY VI. PART I.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*He being in the vaward, placed behind.]*  
“ Some of the editors seem to have considered this as a contradiction of terms, and have proposed to read rearward, but without necessity. Some of the van must have been behind the foremost line of it. We often say the back front of a house.” — STEEVENS. Notwithstanding this note, I must think the change necessary. One would suppose this defence of the text came from one

“ Who never set a squadron in the field,  
Or the division of a battle knew  
More than a spinster.”

But Mr. Steevens has carried arms in the militia.  
I do not know what *van* can mean but the first

line of an army, and what is in the rear of that cannot be the van, but must either be the centre, or what is called now the second line, or the rearward, or what is now called the reserve, which, from the context, must have been the station of Sir John Fastolf. The ancient names of van, centre, and rear, are still in use in our navy, which has not yet followed the example of the army in frenchifying all its military terms. As for the back front of a house (which, by the way, has no connection with the case in question), Mr. Steevens would have done well to have told us who he includes in the *we* who often use it.

### ACT I. SCENE III.

*I'll call for clubs, if you will not away.]* “That is, for peace officers, armed with clubs or staves.”

—MALONE. It is wonderful that these gentlemen, who will quote twenty blackletter-books to investigate what often needs no investigation at all, should be so mainly ignorant of the common customs of the time in which our poet wrote. Whenever any riot or quarrel happened in the

streets, the cry of, Clubs ! was a signal for the apprentices, not the peace officers to arm themselves with clubs and part the fray. There is a note on this expression in Henry VIII. Act V. Scene III. where this passage is cited by M. Mason. The passage in Henry VIII. shews clearly the error of Mr. Malone's note here: “I hit that woman who cried out, *clubs!* when I might see from far some forty truncheoneers draw to her succour which were the hope of the Strand, where she was quartered.”—Surely these were not peace officers with staves who assisted in beating the king's porter in the exercise of his duty.

## ACT I. SCENE IV.

*So piled esteemed.]* “It is possible, however, that Shakespear might have written, “Philistined, i. e. treated as contemptuously, as Sampson was, by the Philistines.”—STEEVENS. Heavens ! what an idea !

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*Pithless arms.]* “Pith was used for marrow, and figuratively for strength.”—JOHNSON !!! Stee-

vens brings two other examples from our poet to confirm this wonderful discovery.

*Haughty.]* “ Haughty is high.”—JOHNSON.  
“ So in the fourth act, valiant and virtuous, full of haughty courage.”—STEEVENS. Here again the two commentators are as usual employed \* like the two philosophers satired by the Cynic in the motto prefixed to these observations.

*O uncle would some part of my young years  
Might but redeem the passage of thy age.]*  
“ This superstition is very ancient. † Some traces of it may be found in the traditions of the Rabbins ; it is enlarged upon in the Alcestes of Euripides, and such offers ridiculed by Juvenal, Sat. XII. Dion Cassius in Vit. Hadrian. folio edition, Hamburgh, vol. 2, p. 1160, insinuates that Hadrian sacrificed his favourite Antinous with

\* This is paraphrased by Steel ‘ One of these fellows is milking a ram and the other holding the pail.’ The substitution of *ram* for *he goat* is judicious, as it expresses the same idea in one word ; but half the folly of the employment is lost by changing *sieve*, which is in the original, to *pail*.

† So ancient that the Latin word *supersticio* is said to be derived from it.

this design. See Rei's *Mari Annotat. in loco.* ‘*De nostris annis tibi Jupiter augent annos,*’ said the Romans to Augustus. See Lister’s Journey to Paris, p. 221.”—VAILLANT. This gentleman has shewn his reading, I will not say his memory; for the quoting the editions and the pages, proves he had the books before him when he wrote the note, which, however, is no illustration of the passage, as there is no superstition in the case, but merely a hyperbolical compliment, which is not uncommon, but would never be made unless known to be impossible Mr. Malone has much better illustrated the passage by the Latin distich he has cited. The same thought occurs in the celebrated dialogue between Horace and Lydia.

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*Reguerdon.] “ Recompence, return.”*--JOHNSON. “ It is, perhaps, a corruption of *regardum*, middle Latin.”--STEEVENS. The meaning of

this word compounded of *re* and *guerdon*, is so obvious that it scarcely needed explanation. Steevens's conjecture is the acme of absurdity.

## ACT IV. SCENE II.

*To rive their dangerous artillery*

*Upon no Christian soul but English Talbot.]*

“I do not understand the phrase; to rive artillery, perhaps, it might be to *drive*, we say to drive a blow, and to drive at a man when we mean to express furious assault.”---JOHNSON. “To rive seems to be used with some deviation from its common meaning in Anthony and Cleopatra, Act IV. Scene II. ‘The soul and body rive not more at parting.’”—STEEVENS. “Rive their artillery seems to mean charge their artillery so much as to endanger their bursting.”—TOLLET. To rive their artillery means only to fire their artillery. To *rive* is to *burst*; and a cannon, when fired, has so much the appearance of bursting that, in the language of poetry, it may well be said to burst. We say a cloud bursts when it thunders.”

—M. MASON. \* I think Johnson's emendation should be adopted, it is only the addition of one letter, and gives a clear sense, which cannot be deduced from the word in the text. Steevens' observation would go to prove that because Shakespear uses a word sometimes in an unusual sense, that any word may mean any thing. Mr. Tollet's meaning cannot possibly be deduced from the words, and the substitution of *burst* for *rive* will shew the fallacy of Mr. M. Mason's. *Burst*, when applied to a thunder cloud, is a neuter verb; but *rive* is here a verb transitive. Both Mr. Tollet and Mr. M. Mason err in supposing artillery here means cannon. Long before the invention of gunpowder, artillery was used for all kinds of missile weapons. It is used in 1 Samuel ch. xx. v. 40, not, as Dr. Johnson says in his Dictionary, for weapons in general, but to the *bow*, *arrow*, and *quiver*, for to those does the context confine it,

\* How far is *rive* connected with *rivet*? To rivet the eye on a person is sometimes used, and in the same sense to rivet the arm of an archer, or even a cannoneer, may be used. So I always understood it when I read Shakespear as a boy, without thinking of notes.

though the Hebrew, the Septuagint, and the Vulgate, express it by a word that may be rendered generally *implements*, The utmost stretch of hyperbole could hardly suppose the French had ten thousand cannonneers in their army.\*

*He fables not.]* Milton's adoption of this expression in his Comus, is surely more worthy of a note than half the remarks in these volumes, which have not incurred the censure of this work.

#### ACT IV. SCENE IV.

*Ringed about.]* “Environed, encircled.”—JOHNSON !!!

#### ACT IV. SCENE VI.

*Despite of fate,*

*To my determined time thou givest new date.]* “i. e. ended.”—STEEVENS. “The word is still used in this sense by legal conveyancers.”—MALONE. It certainly is, but it is not used in this sense here. This seems the meaning of the

\* The preamble to the 33rd of Hen. VIII. c. 9. which is to enforce the practice of archery, calls it an act to promote artillery.

passage, “ In spite of fate, thou hast renewed that life which fate had determined to end;” not actually ended, which certainly could not be the case.

### ACT IV. SCENE VII.

*Amaze.]* i. e. (as in other instances) “ Confound, throw into consternation.”—STEEVENS. Something of this too much.

### ACT V. SCENE III.

*Ban.]* “ To ban is to curse.”---STEEVENS !!!

## HENRY VI. PART II.

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IN this and the succeeding play, Mr. Malone has discovered what lines were re-written by Shakespeare, and what only improved by him. The discovery is ingenious, but the marking the lines either by an asterick or an inverted comma, totally destroys the pleasure of reading the play. The commentators are too apt to consider the text as (to apply what was said on the *Pursuits of Literature*) pegs to hang the notes on. Surely to (use the words,\* with some slight alteration, of Mr. Reeves, in the preface to his improved edition of the Bible) “The index or concordance, or whatever may be the subsidiary matter, should be fash-

\* This alteration was necessary, from the supposition of Mr. Reeves that no book except the Bible was in this predicament.

ioned so as to be subordinate to the original work, and not the text and substance of the work be disfigured, in order to be adapted to the subsidiary matter”

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Yet by your leave the wind was very high*

*And ten to one Old Joan had not gone out.]*

“ I am told by a gentleman better acquainted with falconry than myself, that the meaning, however expressed, is, that the wind being high, it was ten to one that the old hawk had quite flown away, a trick which hawks often play their masters in windy weather.”—JOHNSON. i. e. “ The wind was so high it was ten to one that old Joan would not have taken her flight at the game.”—PERCY. Notwithstanding the skill of Dr. Johnson’s friend in falconry, Dr. Percy is clearly in the right. Shakespear can never mean that *not going out* should signify *not coming home*; besides I know enough of falconry to know that the trick of flying quite away was more probable in a young hawk than an old one. Steevens has a long note

also, to shew his skill in falconry, and his incapability of comprehending what has nothing to do with falconry, for he says all his reading on the subject does not enable him to decide on these discordant explanations; it does, however, enable him to tell us, and even to declare, “that a mistress might have been kept at a cheaper rate than a falcon;” an odd comparison; I should have thought a pack of hounds or a running horse would have been more *germain* to the subject, except indeed Mr. Steevens meant to keep his mistress on the same plan that I have heard was adopted by a country gentleman, who used occasionally to call out to the servant, “John! have you fed the W—?”

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*Gear.*] “Gear was a general word for things or matters.”—JOHNSON. Is it not so now?

*Mates*] “Check-mate is a corruption of the Persian *Shahmat*, the king is killed.”—RITSON. If this is the etymology of check-mate, then

check to the king means king to the king. Checkmate means only a fatal check, from the Spanish word *matare*, to kill, whence the matadores at quadrille. If we wish to trace the word *matare* to its fountain head, we shall find it in the Hebrew, from whence it got into the Arabic, i. e. *maut*, and so into the Spanish, which has many words derived from the Arabic. Mr. Ritson, however, is perfectly right in saying mate here has no allusion to chess, but is taken from the French word *amator* or *mater*.

## ACT III. SCENE II.

*I thank thee, Margaret.]* It seems in the old editions it is *Nell*. While the commentators are settling (and they do it at some length) whether it was probable that the king should forget his wife's name, I will avail myself of Mr. Reed's observation, that if any contraction of the name had been used, it should have been *Meg* (qu. *Peg*) to remark the curious cir-

cumstance of female names that begin with *M* taking a *P* in the familiar diminutive, as Polly for Mary, Peggy for Margaret, Patty for Martha, and Padgy for Margery. Perhaps some of my readers, on seeing this, and reflecting on my present occupation, may be induced to say with St. Paul, “Evil communications corrupt good manners.”

# HENRY VI. PART III.

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## ACT I. SCENE II.

*The Queen with all the northern earls and lords  
Intend here to besiege you in the castle.]* “ I know not whether the author intended any moral instruction, but he that reads this has a striking admonition against that precipitancy by which men often use unlawful means to do that which a little delay would put honestly in their power. Had York staid but a few moments he had saved his cause from the stain of perjury.”—JOHNSON. On this excellent observation Mr. Ritson remarks that it was entirely the imagination of the poet that the Duke of York was perjured, and writes a long historical note in his defence, which is completely refuted by Mr. Malone. But surely

Mr. Ritson forgot that Dr. Johnson was criticising a scene in a drama, and not a history.

### ACT I. SCENE IV.

*We boded again.]* “I suspect, with Dr. Johnson, that we should read we budged again. To budge Cole renders *pedem referre*, to retreat, the precise sense required here.”—MALONE. “I believe that we botch’d, only means we made bad or bungling work of our attempt to rally. *A low unskilful tailor is often called a botcher.*”—STEEVENS. Budge should certainly be in the text; the emendation is equally confirmed by the sense of Malone and the nonsense of Steevens.

*She wolf of France.]* It is remarkable, that Mr. Mason, when he cites Gray’s imitations of other poets, omits this.

*Last line of the Scene.]* “This gallant nobleman.”—MALONE. This is said of the Duke of York, but is erroneously said, “he was not a gallant nobleman.” He was either a monarch fighting for his crown against an usurper, or a traitor

rebelling against his lawful sovereign. This, and the future succession of the crown, was finally determined by the battle of Tewksbury. Though perhaps the battle of Bosworth field might have reversed the decree, had Henry VII been the real heir of the house of Lancaster. While we contemplate the reigns of Elizabeth, the second Mary, and Anne, we are not anxious for a Salique law, though no Englishman can reflect without some dread on what may happen from female sovereigns and their connections, when he sees Philip and Mary on the statute book.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Methought he bore him in the thickest troop  
As doth a lion in a herd of neat.]* “ i. e. he demeaned himself.—MALONE. Was this explanation necessary? Mr. Home thought the following passage in Douglas sufficiently clear for an English audience without a note:

—For whose dear sake  
I will not bear myself as I resolv'd.

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*Brake]* “A brake *anciently* signified a thicket.”—STEEVENS. What does it signify now? We have had this very common word investigated before in a note on *Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

## ACT IV. SCENE III.

*And come now to create you Duke of York.]* “Might we not read, with a slight alteration, and come to new-create you Duke of York?”—JOHNSON. We certainly might, but I do not see why we should.

## ACT IV. SCENE VII.

*Now brother Richard, Lord Hastings, and the rest.]* “Mr. M. Mason recommends the omission of Lord, which is objected to by Mr. Malone, on the notion of modern and ancient phraseology being different. But Steevens so clearly shews the general correctness of Shakespear’s verse, that I am surprised that any editor who printed his note could retain the word lord in the text.

## ACT V. SCENE II.

*Which sounded like a clamour in a vault.]* “ That is, like the noise of a cannon in a vault. Shakespear’s alteration here is perhaps not so judicious as many others that he has made. In the old play, instead of *cannon* we have *clamour*.”—MALONE. “ The indistinct gabble of undertakers while they adjust a coffin in a *family* vault, will abundantly illustrate the preceding simile. Such a peculiar hubbub of inarticulate sounds might have attracted our author’s notice; it has often forced itself on mine. Shakespear means a vault in general, not a burying place.—STEEVENS. The old reading *clamour* seems the best, but there does not appear to be much weight in Mr. Steevens’s abundant illustration.

## ACT V. SCENE V.

*Devil’s butcher.]* Theobald, with a peculiar happiness of mis-comprehension, says devil’s butcher is equivalent with *kill devil*, and proposes to read devil butcher; but Dr. Johnson justly

says, “ Devil’s butcher is a butcher set on by the devil ; either reading may serve, without so long a note.”

### ACT V. SCENE VII.

*Triumphs.]* “ Triumphs are public shews ; the word has occurred too frequently to need exemplification in the present case.” — STEEVENS. Then why is it noticed here ?

# RICHARD III.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Sun of York.]* “ Alluding to the cognizance of Edward the Fourth, which was a sun.”—  
STEEVENS. I cannot think any such allusion intended.

*He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber.]* “ War capers, this is poetical, though a little harsh ; if it be *York* that capers, the antecedant is at such a distance that it is almost forgotten.”—JOHNSON.  
I am inclined to think that neither York nor war is the antecedent ; but that the poet, with his not unusual negligence of arrangement, meant a warrior in general, without considering he had omitted the antecedent.

*Descant on my own infirmity.]* “ Descant is a term in music, signifying in general that kind of harmony wherein one part is broken, and formed

into a kind of paraphrase on the other. The propriety and elegance of the above figure, without such an idea of the nature of descant, cannot be discerned."—SIR J. HAWKINS. "That this is the original meaning of the term is certain; but *I believe* the word is here used in its secondary and colloquial sense, without any reference to music."—MALONE. Of the justice of Mr. Malone's belief there can be no doubt. One wonders how such an idea as that expressed in the preceding note could possibly have entered into any human brain.

*Were it to call king Edward's widow sister.]*  
Dr. Johnson, with too much refinement, supposes the inserting widow for wife to be a kind of hint to Clarence to kill his brother, but Steevens very properly explains it as only a contemptuous allusion to the queen being widow of Sir John Grey.

### ACT I. SCENE III.

*And sent to warn them to his royal presence.]*  
"To warn them; i. e. is to summon."—STEEVENS.  
Surely this explanation might have been spared.

I wonder this was not added to the proofs which the critics so frequently bring of Shakespear's having been at the desk of an attorney.

*To royalize.]* i. e. "To make royal."—STEEVENS!!!

*Pilled from me.]* "To pill is to pillage."—STEEVENS. "To pill is literally to take off the outside rind; thus they say in Devonshire to pill an apple, rather than pare it."—HENLEY. Pill is a word that really required explanation to the common readers of Shakespear, and Steevens has given the true one. To *peel* is the common word for taking off the rind of fruit all over the kingdom, and Mr. Henley might have spared himself the trouble of telling us how it is pronounced in the dialect of Devonshire.

*Ah gentle villain.]* Warburton very pleasantly suggests *ungentle*; but I think, with Mr. M. Mason, that it is said ironically, and that no opposition is meant between *villain* and *gentleman* in their feudal sense, as Dr. Johnson supposes.

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*Think you my uncle did dissemble?"* "Shakespear uses dissemble in the sense of acting fraudulently, feigning what we do not feel or think; though strictly it means to conceal our real thoughts or affections."---MALONE. Here seems to me a distinction without a difference. Lord Chesterfield, I know, takes some pains to distinguish simulation from dissimulation, but surely he who feigns what he does not feel or think, must conceal his real thoughts and affections, and vice versa.

## ACT II. SCENE IV.

*Pitchers have ears.]* "Shakespear has not quoted this proverbial saying correctly. It appears, from a dialogue 'both pleasant and pitiful,' by William Bulleyn, 1564.' that the old proverb is, Small pitchers have great ears."---MALONE. Is this a serious note of Mr. Malone's, or is he ironically ridiculing some of the notes of his coadjutors?

## ACT III. SCENE I

*And in good time here comes the sweating lord.]*  
“ De bonne heure.”—STEEVENS. Bravo! Mons. Steevens. Nevertheless, if it is necessary to translate Shakespear into French, I would rather advise the translator to render this *apropos* than *de bonne heure*.

## ACT III. SCENE II.

*Have with you.]* “ A familiar phrase in parting, as much as *take something with you*; or, *I have something to say to you.*” JOHNSON. “ This phrase so frequently occurs in Shakespear, that I wonder Johnson should mistake its meaning. It signifies merely *I will go along with you*, and is an expression in use at this day.”—M. MASON. I perfectly agree with Mr. M. Mason in every part of this note, except his wonder that Dr. Johnson should mistake the meaning of Shakespear.

## ACT IV. SCENE IV.

*Pewfellow.]* “It is a word yet in use.”—Sir J. HAWKINS. It has never been my fortune to hear it used. This note, by the way, runs directly counter to the generality of the notes of this sort, which state expressions to be obsolete that are now in constant use.

*Humphry Hour.]* The only possible sense that can be extracted from this (and a very lame one it is), must be an allusion to some known servant of the Duchess of York, familiar to the minds of the people at the time Shakspear wrote, either from tradition or some popular story. It does, however, knight’s service to the critics, by giving them an opportunity of expatiating on the origin of the proverbial saying, *to dine with Duke Humphrey.*

*Shall I go win my daughter to thy will.]* Surely Shakespear could not mean to repeat so improbable a circumstance in the same play as the courtship of Lady Anne, and yet no hint is dropped of this compliance of the queen being feigned.

In this, as in many other parts of this play, the alterations of Cibber are highly deserving of praise.

## ACT IV. SCENE. V.

*Sir Christopher Anwicke.]* Here we have again a dissertation on the title of Sir annexed to the clergy; it has occurred once before in this play, Act III. Scene II. where Hastings calls a priest Sir John, and is accompanied there by a short note of Malone. It is clear to every one who has consulted the buttery books, either of Oxford or Cambridge, or, as Mr. M. Mason has informed us, of Dublin.

## ACT V. SCENE III.

*Braved the east.]* "Made it splendid."—STEVENS. Is it so? I think not: it appears to me exactly explained, if explanation were needed, by a passage spoken by the same character in the same play.

"We must be brief when rebels brave the field."

## H E N R Y VIII.

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Dr. Johnson has a note on this play, wherein he expresses his doubt if the theatre is not as inadequate to the representation of a coronation as of a battle. This might be, in some degree, the case in the time of Shakespear; but surely our modern theatres are fully adequate to represent the procession of a coronation in all its splendor. The coronation of his present majesty had many errors in the conducting of it. And as both the theatres vied with each other in imitating it, and *at that time* Covent Garden was more celebrated for pantomimic pageantry than Drury-lane, and was besides the larger theatre, the late Duke

of York is reported to have said, that the coronation at Drury-lane was represented as it actually was, and at Covent Garden as it ought to have been. Mr. Seymour, who is very fond of discovering what parts of all the plays belong to Shakespear, and what to others, has ascribed great part of this play to Ben Johnson, and proves, as usual with his prompt *ipse dixit*. To this we may apply the words of the satiric poet.

But veteran critics are not so deceived,  
If veteran critics are to be believed;  
Once seen, they know an author ever more,  
Nay, swear to hands they never saw before:  
How doth it make judicious readers smile,  
When authors are detected by their style;  
When every one, who knows the author, knows  
He shifts his style much oftener than his clothes.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*No man's pie is freed  
From his ambitious finger.]* To have a finger in  
the pie is a proverbial phrase. See Ray, 244."—  
REED. Of the truth of this *learned* note I am

convinced, without referring to the authority of Ray ; but that Mr. Isaac Reed could have written such a note, hardly can be convinced.

### ACT I. SCENE II.

*The many.]* “The *many* is the *meiny*, the train, the people.—JOHNSON. This is really too bad.

*To cope malicious censurers.]* “To engage, to encounter. The word is still used in some counties.”—JOHNSON. The word is now in general use ; but so far from being provincial, it is oftener written than spoken : the only singularity here, is, its not being followed by *with*.

*By day and night.]* This, Mr. Steevens gravely tells us, he *believes* was “a phrase *anciently* signifying at *all times, every way, completely*;” and to prove this, he quotes a passage from the *Merry Wives of Windsor*!!! He also tells us, that some critics have supposed it an adjunction, and I am not sure they are in the wrong here ; though I am sure that nothing can be more common than the use of the words in the other sense, even in

these degenerate days. I can give one example from Midas :—

By day and by night,  
Juno will have her right,  
Nor be of dues nuptial defrauded.

Where she undoubtedly means, *at all times, every way, completely.*

### ACT I. SCENE III.

*Fool and feather.]* “ This does not allude to the feathers anciently worn in the hats and caps of our countrymen (a circumstance to which no ridicule could justly belong), but to an effeminate fashion recorded in Greene’s *Farewell to Folly*, 1617; from whence it appears that even young gentlemen carried fans of feathers in their hands.”

—STEEVENS. Is Mr. Steevens quite clear that no ridicule could attach to feathers worn in the hats or caps of men, (whether justly or not, is not the question. The following lines are extracted from “ Manners,” a satire, by Paul Whitehead.

Mark our bright youths, how gallant and how gay,  
Fresh plumed and powder'd in review array.

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Yet vain, while prompt to arms by *plume* and pay,  
He takes the soldier's name from soldier's play.

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The laced boy may strut the soldier's part,  
Bedeck'd with *feathers*, tho' unarmed in heart.

I suppose these feathers were on the heads, and  
not in the hands of the officers.

## ACT II. SCENE IV.

*Where powers are your retainers, and your  
words*

*Domestics to you.]* No possible sense can be  
struck out from words; the emendation sug-  
gested by Mr. Tyrwhit is very happy (*wards*);  
it is effected by the change of one letter only,  
and gives complete sense.

## ACT III. SCENE I.

In a passage in this scene, and elsewhere in this play, but nowhere else, though it frequently occurs in every book in the English language, Mr. Seymour disputes the use of *ye* for *you*, in the oblique case of the pronoun plural. Though we must say, with one of the first of critics, that, in such cases, universal practice is authority. If absurd refinement chose to adopt the absurd substitute of the plural for the singular, in the pronoun of the second person, after such a gross violation of the rules of grammar, no pedantic grammarian has a right to step in and say, you shall not even be permitted to make the only alteration you can make for it, by using *you* for the singular, and *ye* always for the plural. No one ever thought of writing *ye* for *you* in the nominative singular, and why should any one be obliged to write *you* for *ye* in the oblique plural, which is never done. Immediately after, Mr. S. notices in the following passage,

*if you have any justice, any pity,* the use of the oblique for the nominative ; but, in a subsequent passage, where the second person singular is meant, *you are full of heavenly stuff*, no objection is made.

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*Forty hours.]* Malone proposes to read four for forty. Steevens defends the old reading, and produces many instances, both from Shakespear. and other old writers, of the use of forty, “when no very exact reckoning was necessary ;” to these may be added what the mayor says in Henry VI. Part I.

“I myself fight not once in forty years,”

### ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Great-bellied women*

*That had not half a week to go.]* i. e. “To continue in their pregnancy.” — STEEVENS !!! I believe this great difficulty has been explained before.

## ACT V. SCENE III.

*The tribulation of Tower-hill, or the limbs of Limehouse.]* The long dissertations of Steevens, T. Warton, Ritson, Malone, and Henley, on this foolish passage, as they do not at all explain it, might have been well spared in this edition.

# TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

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## ACT I. SCENE III.

*Made a toast for Neptune.]* “ How a toast is to be made by immersion in water, or drowning, I cannot conceive, and wish some of the commentators had instructed us.”—SEYMOUR. It is very obvious that bread can only be made a toast literally by holding it to the fire ; but as toasts so made are often soaked in ale or water, or other liquid, any thing thus immersed in water may be surely called metaphorically a toast ; surely the French use of it now, and the common use of it lately for a health, rendered the aid of commentators unnecessary. Did Mr. Seymour never hear the origin of calling a lady, whose health is drunk in her absence, a toast ?

*Deracinate.] i. e. "Force up by the roots."*—  
STEEVENS. This is, I suppose, explained for the benefit of the country gentlemen.

*O, when degree is shaked.] "I would read, so when degree is shaked."*—JOHNSON. Then you would read wrong.

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*Who knows what follows.] "Who knows what ill consequences may follow from pursuing this or that course?"*—MALONE!!!! In justice to Mr. Malone, I must say he is very seldom guilty of these needless explanations.

*Reasons.] "Reason and raisin were, I believe, in Shakespear's time pronounced alike."*—MALONE. I do not know how they were pronounced in the age of Elizabeth, but I do know that they are pronounced alike in the age of George the Third, by every person who speaks without affectation. This wretched quibble, as Mr. Malone chuses to call it, occurs in Henry IV. P. I. where Falstaff says, "If reasons were as plenty as blackberries, I would not give you one on compulsion.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*He is so (8) plaguy proud, that the (9) death tokens of it*

*Cry; no recovery.]* “(8) I cannot help regarding the vulgar epithet *plaguy*, which extends the verse beyond its proper length, as the wretched interpolation of some foolish player.”—STEEVENS.

(9) “Alluding to the decisive spots appearing on those infected by the plague.”—STEEVENS. Here we have two notes of Steevens, in direct opposition to each other; for the second shews that the word *plaguy* is not here a vulgar epithet, derived from the figurative application of plague to any thing that is tedious and tiresome, but that it signifies simply pestilential.

AJAX. *Shall I call you father?*

NESTOR. *Aye, my good son.]* “In the folio and in the modern editions, Ajax desires to give the title of father to Ulysses; in the quarto more naturally to Nestor.”—JOHNSON. I must dissent from the quarto. Surely it is most natural that

Ajax should express his regard to the person who had just been flattering him in the grossest manner.

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*Love's invisible soul.]* “ This may mean the soul of Love invisible every where else.”—JOHNSON. But what does ‘ the soul of Love invisible every where else’ mean?

*My disposer, Cressid.]* This is perfectly unintelligible, and all the labours of all the commentators have not thrown a gleam of light on it: the word being repeated twice immediately afterwards, forbids all conjectural emendation. Had this not been the case, all difficulty would have been removed by reading, *his disposer*, i. e. *the disposer of Troilus*.

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*All constant men, Troilusses.]* Notwithstanding all the reasoning of the critics, the emendation of Hanmer (*inconstant*) is not only plausible, but absolutely necessary. Pandarus is not uttering a

prophecy, but an imprecation on the lovers and himself in case Troilus and Cressida are false one to the other. Nor why Troilus should always be called constant, if he proved false to Cressida, these critics would have done well to explain. M. Mason's objection to constant, which, by the way, I have almost transcribed, is unanswerable ; though attempted, in vain, to be answered by Malone.

#### ACT IV. SCENE II.

*How my achievements mock me.]* Here Mr. Seymour takes occasion to censure Mr. Steevens for his frequent use of the word *so*, in his referring from one passage of the poet to another, and tells you, as what he thinks a pleasant jest of Bannister's, on many of Steevens' notes being so so, (in which I agree without a joke); but why the *thus*, which is as frequently used by Mr. Seymour on the same occasion, is better than the *so* of Mr. Steevens, I cannot discern.

## ACT V. SCENE II.

*Potatoe.]* “Potatoes were anciently regarded as provocatives. See Mr. Collins’s note, which, on account of its length, is given at the end of the play.”—STEEVENS. This note, or rather dissertation, is singularly curious and instructive: to be told the idea our ancestors entertained of a root at its first introduction, which is now almost in as general use as bread, and is an excellent substitute for it when wheat is scarce, cannot but be highly interesting; and yet when this note first appeared, all the periodical writings of the day were outrageous against it, taxing the writer with immorality for pointing out this stimulus in a food which is, I believe, as innocent of it as bread, or any thing that is nutritious.\* I remember meeting with a just censure of this violent attack, in a book which I happened to take up by accident, where it was not very likely to be found—Wesley’s Journal.

\* This illiberal attack has been since followed up in the Pursuits of Literature.

## ACT V. SCENE IX.

*Even with the veil and darkening of the sun.]*  
“The veil is, I think the sinking of the sun, not the veil or cover.”—JOHNSON. I much doubt this: it is not the decline, but the occultation of the sun that darkens it. Besides, is *vail*, in this sense, ever used as a substantive?

## ACT V. SCENE XI.

*Make wells and Niobes of the maids and wives.]*  
“I adopt the conjecture of a deceased friend, who would read *welland*, i. e. weeping Niobes. The Saxon termination of *and* for *ing* is common in our old poets, and often corrupted at the press.”—WHALLEY. I believe such Saxonisms are seldom found in poets of Shakespear’s time, except perhaps in Spencer, who affected obsolete words. The emendation might have been plausible in Chaucer or Gower.

## TIMON OF ATHENS.

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### ACT II. SCENE I.

*No porter at the gate,*

*But rather one that smiles, and still invites*

*All that pass by.]* “I imagine a line is lost here, in which the behaviour of a surly porter was described.”—JOHNSON. “There is no occasion to suppose the loss of a line; sternness was the characteristic of a porter. There appeared at Killingworth Castle (1575) ‘a porter tall of person, big of lim, and *stearne of countinauns*.’”—FARMER. “The word *one* in the second line does not refer to porter, but means a person. He has no stern forbidding porter at the gate to keep people out, but a person who invites them in.”—M. MASON. Dr. Farmer is right, but not explicit

enough. M. Mason gives the true sense, with clearness and precision. The truth is, Dr. Farmer's hobby-horse was ready, and he must up and ride, though he left the sense of the passage unexplained, and Steevens immediately mounted behind him; or, to speak plainly, Dr. Farmer could not resist the opportunity of proving from an old book with obsolete spelling, that porters were surly, and therefore neglected his duty as an explainer of the difficulties in Shakespear; and Steevens was so pleased with following up the learning of his friend by a quotation from Decker, that he quite forgot there was any such a person as Shakespear existing;

*I go, Sir?*] “This last speech is not a captious repetition of what Caphis says, but a further injunction to him to go. *I*, in the old dramatic writers, stands for *aye*, as ‘it does in this place.’”—M. MASON. I have left Mr. M. Mason’s opinion before the reader, though I do not heartily concur in it.”—STEEVENS. I applaud Mr. Steevens both for his candour in inserting this remark, and his hesitation in concurring with it.

*Wasteful cock.]* Dr. Johnson and Mr. Collins have been put to what I should have thought the unnecessary trouble of explaining this, had not the absurd misrepresentation of it by Hanmer and Pope rendered it necessary. HANMER says, i. e. “A cockloft, a garret, and a wasteful cock, signifies a garret lying in waste, neglected, put to no use;” and Pope, it seems from Mr. Malone’s note (for I never have seen Pope’s Shakespear) boldly reads for *wasteful cock*, *lonely room*. Dr. Johnson, in refutation of Hanmer, says, “I do not know that *cock* is ever used for *cockloft*, or *wasteful* for *lying in waste*, or that *lying in waste* is at all a phrase.” To the last of this Dr. Farmer replies, “It is certain that *lying in waste* is still a very common phrase.” I confess I am not so certain of this, nor do I recollect to have ever met with it: ‘to lay waste,’ is, I know, a very common phrase.

*I knew it the most general way.]* “General is not speedy, but compendious; the way to try many at a time.”—JOHNSON. General, we all must know, cannot mean speedy, since it never

has or can have that meaning, neither do I think that it has here the other meaning suggested, but is used here as it *commonly*, *usually*, and *generally* is, for *common and usual*.

*Ingeniously I speak.]* ‘Ingenious was anciently used instead of ingenuous.

A course of learning and ingenious studies.”---REED.

The words are now confounded by ignorant speakers; and so they might have been in Shakespeare’s time, by ignorant printers. Though surely the line quoted is not a proof of this, for ingenious would be to the full as proper there as ingenuous.

*How unluckily it happened that I should purchase the day before for a little part, and undo a great deal of honor.]* This has been a great crust for the critics. Theobald proposes to read a little *dirt*; Johnson a little *park*, and M. Mason a little *port*, to *shew magnificence*. Steevens defends the old reading thus, “by purchasing what brought me but little honor, I have lost the more honorable opportunity of supplying the wants of my friend:” and he is certainly right. Neither

does the phrase, *purchase for*, want the excuse brought by Malone from Shakespear's careless phraseology, for *I that purchased, laid out my money in the purchase of something* (what is not meant to be specified, whether estate, park, or equipage) for the sake of a little part of honor, have thus lost a great deal of honor. Dr. Farmer must have had a very keen eye for a quibble to find one here between *honor* in its usual sense, and *honor* the legal term for a manor.

*Spirit.]* “The word was frequently pronounced as one syllable, and sometimes, *I think*, written sprite.”---MALONE !!!

## ACT II. SCENE IV.

*A prodigal course  
Is like the sun's, but not like his recoverable.]*  
“ That is, like him in blaze and splendor.

*Soles occidere et redire possunt. CATUL.]* ---JOHNSON.

I think, from the context, the shortness and swiftness of the sun's course is more alluded to than its splendor. The sun is splendid, but not its course, and that the same allusion is meant in

the illustration from Catullus, appears from what immediately follows.

Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux  
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.

*Enter Servilius.]* “It may be observed, that Shakespear has unskilfully filled his Greek story with Roman names.”—JOHNSON. Shakespear’s negligence in this respect is so glaring, that the remark is superfluous, and surely it is very oddly placed here, in the middle of the third act, when we have had Lucius and Lucullus and Sempronius, &c. before. If the remark was necessary, it should have been made on the *dramatis personæ*.

### ACT III. SCENE V.

*’Tis honor with most lands to be at odds.]* This passage has created much difficulty among the critics, and consequently several emendations have been suggested. Warburton, who is followed by Johnson, proposes *hands*. Steevens defends the old reading, but does not give, I think, the exact ground on which it is defencible. The

question is not whether it is *really* honorable to quarrel or be at odds with most of the lands or kingdoms of the earth, as Mr. Malone objects, but surely it is very natural for a soldier, on the point to take up arms against his own country, to inveigh against national ingratitude in general ; if he thought it honorable to fight against Athens, it was no reflection on his honor to suppose that most other states deserved the same treatment. I will agree with Mr. Malone that, “ to say it is honorable to fight with the greatest part of the world is very wild,” but Alcibiades is very wild when he says it. King David tells us that when he was angry he said ‘ All men are liars.’

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Thou art quick,*

*But yet I'll bury thee.]* “ Thou has life and motion in thee.—JOHNSON. To be quick anciently was simply equivalent with alive, and so it is used here. The opposition between quick and dead is marked in the creed. It is also used by Hamlet exactly as it is here.

Be buried quick with her, and so will I.

*Tub fast.]* How the critics like to dwell on these beastly explanations!

*Be no turn-coats.]* “By an old statute, those women who lived in a state of reprobation, were, among other articles of dress, enjoined to wear their garments with the wrong side outward, on pain of forfeiting them. Perhaps there is in this passage a reference to it.”—HENLEY. This explanation, as Mr. Steevens justly observes, can never accord with the sense of the passage, which is preceded by these words, ‘be whores still.’ Surely there is no necessity to remark that *turn-coat* is a common term of reproach to a person who changes his party or opinion.

*Hadst thou like us from our first swath, &c.]* “There is in this speech a sullen haughtiness and malignant dignity, suitable at once to the lord and the man-hater. The impatience with which he bears to have his luxury reproached by one that never had luxury within his reach, is natural and graceful.”—JOHNSON. In the conception and expression of this note we trace the mind and the pen of the author: a collection of such notes by

Johnson, would have been indeed a commentary worthy the critic and the poet.

*If thou hadst not been born the worst of men*

*Thou hadst been a knave and a flatterer.]*

"Dryden has quoted two verses from Virgil to shew how well he could have written satire." From the way in which this note is printed, I do not know whether it come from Mr. Nicholson, or Dr. Johnson — "I wish the lines had been quoted, as I am at a loss where to find them."\* The observation, is, however, just: the style of Juvenal seems to me formed on that passage of the second Georgic which begins

Si non ingentem, &c.

If he had not read

Ut gemmâ bibat et sarrano indormiet ostre

Possibly he would not have written

Ut pueris placeas, et declamatio fies.

\* These, I find, are the lines; surely a very indifferent specimen of satire, unless gross rustic abuse may be deemed satire. I, however, do not retract my opinion of the justice of the general observation.

• Non tu in triviis indocte solebas

• Stridenti miserum stipula disperdere carmen !

*All thy safety were remotion.]* i.e. “ Removal from place to place.”—STEEVENS. “ *Remotion* means, I apprehend, not a frequent *removal* from place, but merely *remoteness*, the being placed at a distance from the lion.”—MALONE. Malone is clearly in the right.

*The sun's a thief.]* What a mass of notes about this passage, which is obviously an imitation of one of the odes attributed to Anacreon, and which is shown by Dr. Farmer to have been within the reach of Shakespear.

#### ACT V. SCENE V.

*No more.]* “ I wish the reader may not find himself affected in the same manner by our commentaries, and often concur in a similar exclamation.” STEEVENS. This remark is perfectly just.

# CORIOLANUS.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*We are reckoned poor citizens, the Patricians good.]* “ Good is here used in the mercantile sense. So Touchstone, in Eastward Hoe,

Known good men, well monied men.”---FARMER.

“ Again, in the Merchant of Venice,  
Antonio's a good man.”---MALONE.

I am rather inclined to think it is not used in the mercantile sense here, but merely to mark the strong distinction between the poor and the powerful ; good is never, I believe, used in the sense of rich, except it is coupled with man; as in both the instances here cited, a good citizen, or a good merchant, is never used for a rich one.

*As I could pick my lance.]* “ And so the word (pitch) is still pronounced in Staffordshire, where

they say picke me such a thing, that is pitch or throw any thing that the demander wants.”—TOLLETT.  
“ The word is used again (read before) in Henry VIII. with a slight variation in the spelling, ‘ I’ll peek you o’er the pales.’—MALONE. It may be very proper for the porter in Henry VIII. to talk *slang*, but as it is very improper to make Coriolanus talk in the Staffordshire dialect, I would certainly correct the error of the press, and write, as every one reads, and as the actors always speak, pitch.

*In what fashion*

*More than his singularity he goes.]* “ We will learn what he is besides going himself, what are his powers, and what is his appointment.”—JOHNSON. “ Perhaps the word singularity implies a sarcasm on Coriolanus, and the speaker means to say, after what fashion beside that in which his own singularity invests him he goes into the field.”—STEEVENS. The passage is very obscure, and wants explanation, which is very properly given by Dr. Johnson. There seems no meaning in the question, according to the sug-

gestion of Steevens. There is also an inaccuracy of construction in his note, *he goes* should be either *does he go*, or *goes he*.

## ACT I. SCENE II.

*They have press'd a power.]* “Thus the modern editors. The old copy reads, They have prest a power, which may signify have a power ready, from *pret*, French.”—STEEVENS. “The spelling of the old copy proves nothing, for participles were generally so spelt in Shakespear's time, so *distrest*, *blest*.\* I believe press'd, in its usual sense, is right: It appears to have been used in Shakespear's time in the sense of impress'd.”—MALONE. The conjecture of Steevens is too absurd to need refutation. It is a little odd that Mr. Malone should say that press'd is applied in its *usual* sense, and then refer us for this sense to the age of Shakespear. But, in fact, *press'd* is the usual, and *impress'd* only the legal word now. Have we not in the song,

’Tis to honor we call you, not press you like slaves.  
And who ever heard of an impress gang?

\* So the word is generally spelt now.

## ACT I. SCENE III.—IV.

*His mailed hand.]* i. e, “ His hand covered or armed with mail.”—DOUCE !!!

*Our fielded friends.]* “ Our friends who are in the field of battle.”—STEEVENS !!!

## ACT I. SCENE VIII.

*Hector,*

*Who was the whip of your bragg'd progeny.]* Dr. Johnson objects to this as meaning the whip with which the Trojans were chastised; but surely, as Mr. Malone observes, it may, without any difficulty, mean the whip they used: so, in the celebrated soliloquy of Hamlet,

The whips and scorns of time.

Time is the agent, not the patient. And again in this play, Act 4, Scene 6,

Not a hair upon a soldier's head  
Which will not prove a whip.

Change *whip* for *sword* or *spear*, would there be any difficulty?

*A charter to extol her son.]* “A privilege to praise her own son.”—JOHNSON!!! If he was her son, surely he was her *own* son.

## ACT I. SCENE X.

*Potch.]* Read poach with Mr. Heath, or poche with Mr. Malone. “From *pocher*, French, to pierce, to stab, to pierce.”—JOHNSON’S DICT. In Dryden’s Troilus and Cressida we find, “Some sturdy Trojan will poach me up with a long pole.”

*’Tis south the city mills.]* “But where could Shakespear have heard of these mills? I believe we should read,

“Tis south of the city a mile.”---TYRWHIT.

How could Steevens and Malone think it worth the trouble to answer such an objection as this?

Men. *Brings a (he) victory in his pocket?*  
*The wounds become him.*

Vol. *On’s brows, Menenius. He comes the third time home with the oaken garland.]* “Mr. M. Mason proposes that there shall be a

comma after Menenius. ‘On’s brows, Menenius, he comes the third time home with the oaken garland,’ for, says the commentator, ‘it was the oaken garland, not the wounds, that Volumnia says he had on his brows.’ In Julius Cæsar we find a dialogue exactly similar.

CAS. No, it is Casca, one incorporate  
To our attempt. Am not I staid for Cimria?  
CIN. I am glad on’t.

i. e. I am glad that Casca is incorporate, &c. But he appears to me to have mis-apprehended the passage. Volumnia answers Menenius, without taking notice of his last words, ‘*The wounds become him.*’ Menenius had asked, Brings he victory in his pocket? He brings it, says Volumnia, on his brows, for he comes the third time home brow-bound with the oaken garland, the emblem of victory.”—MALONE. Mr. Malone appears to me to have mis-apprehended the note of Mr. M. Mason, who seems to give precisely the same meaning with Mr. Malone. Indeed I read both the notes several times over with very great attention, before I could find what other meaning

could be adduced from Mr. M. Mason's\* note, but at last I found that he must suppose Mr. M. Mason explains the passage thus: "He comes the third time home, with the oaken garland on's brows," a construction, as express'd, very uncongenial with Shakespear's prose style. But the illustration from Julius Cæsar exactly corresponds with the idea of Mr. Malone. Cinna answers Cassius without taking notice of his last words, *am I not staid for, Cinna?* Exactly as Volumnia answers Menenius, without taking notice of his last words, *the wounds become him.*

*Proud to do't.]* "Proud to do is the same as proud of doing."—JOHNSON. It is not the same. *Proud to do* is common, unaffected, colloquial English. *Proud of doing*, in common discourse, would be pedantic affectation. We might as well substitute *I shall be glad of seeing you*, for *glad to see you*.

\* By comma I conceive he meant generally a stop; there is a colon in this edition, I prefer a period. This direction should have convinced Mr. Malone that there was no idea of connecting so closely *his brows* with what follows; if he had said *only* a comma, there might have been some ground for the supposition.

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*Lurch.]* “To lurch, in Shakespear’s time, signified to win a maiden, set at cards, &c.”—MALONE. Here again we have one of the most common phrases of the present day referred to the age of Shakespear. Did Mr. Malone never play, or sit by when others have played, at whist, picquet, or cribbage? He must then have known what a lurch is, and also that what he calls a maiden game, though it is a lurch, is distinguished from a common lurch by the appellation of a *love* game. I wish the critics would think that a little acquaintance with the common language and habits of life is *almost* as necessary as black letter reading to a commentator on Shakespear. Having said this, I must add, that the drift of the whole sentence cannot be better explained than it is in the conclusion of this note.

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*’Twas from the canon.]* This, Dr. Johnson explains, “contrary to the established rule.” and

Mr. M. Mason, as being in consequence of the *veto*. “the established rule of the tribunes.” I am rather inclined to the last opinion, if canon is meant for rule; but it is very probable that Shakespear (considering his little attention to this sort of propriety) might mean, that the absolute *shall* of the tribune came as loudly as if from the mouth of a cannon.

*Clean clam.]* These words, which to a common reader are nonsense, are very well explained by Steevens and Reed. This is the proper application of obsolete reading to the illustration of Shakespear not using Shakespear as the means of displaying obsolete reading.

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*Now humble as the ripest mulberry,*

*That will not hold the handling.]* “Æschylus, (as appears from a fragment of his ΦΡΥΓΕΣ ἢ ΕΚΤΟΡΟΣ ΛΥΓΡΑ preserved by Athenæus, lib. ii. says of Hector, that he was softer than mulberries ‘Ανηρ δ' ἐκεῖνος ἦν πεπαίτερος μορφων.’”—MUSGRAVE. In a note on Troilus and Cressida, Act V. S. III.

Mr. Steevens observes, that Shakespear seems not to have studied the Homeric character of Hector, whose disposition was by no means inclined to clemency. Will any fanciful advocate for the learning of Shakespear, contend, from this circumstance, that he was acquainted with the fragments of Æschylus?

#### ACT IV. SCENE V.

*If so be.]* This phrase, which seems now only equivalent with *if*, was formerly in general use; it now is the common phrase of the vulgar, I cannot specify in what particular counties, I can only answer for Berkshire and Middlesex. That it was formerly in general use (besides the authority of our poet) is proved from the 1 Cor. chap. xv. v. 13. *Whom He raised not, if so be\* that the dead rise not.*

#### ACT IV. SCENE VI.

*It turns their countenances.]* i. e. "Renders their aspect sour. This allusion to the

\* *If so be that,* Gr. εἰπεὶ ἂγα.

ascescence of milk occurs again in Timon of Athens.

His friendship form a faint and milky heart,  
It turns in less than two nights."—MALONE.

" I believe nothing more is meant than changes their countenances."—STEEVENS. Steevens is surely right. Turn, for ascescence, as applied to milk, is very natural in the passage quoted, but not in the passage commented on.

*To melt your city leads about your pates.]* " Our author, I believe, was here thinking of the old city gates of London."—MALONE. What an idea !! We are obliged, however, to Mr. Steevens for confuting it, and for telling us, " that leads were not peculiar to the old city gates, and that few ancient houses of consequence were without them."—What a pity it is that they should be *now* out of use, though I must confess I have seen such things.

## ACT V. SCENE V.

*For certain drops of salt.]* " Certain tears."—  
MALONE !!!

# JULIUS CÆSAR.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*That Tiber trembled underneath his banks.]*  
“ As Tiber is represented by the figure of a man, the feminine gender is improper.”—STEEVENS. This is very just, but let us hear Mr. MALONE: “ Drayton, in his Polyolbion, frequently describes the rivers of England as females, even when he speaks of the presiding powers of the stream; Spencer, on the other hand, represents them more classically as males.” Mr. Steevens replies, “ The presiding power of some of Drayton’s rivers were female, like *Sabina*, &c.” And Mr. Steevens is clearly right. Though Thames and Tiber are male, to apply *he* to Isis, Sabina, or Arethusa, would be a gross false concord, notwithstanding the rule in *propria quæ maribus*; this distinction is observed both by Spencer and Drayton. A

passage in T. Warton's poem of *Mons Catharina* always appeared to me as highly improper, notwithstanding it may possibly be justified by the strict rules of Latin grammar. Having mentioned Isis, he adds, *ille—se jactat pulcherimus amnis.* I presume Mr. Warton thought so afterwards; for in the last edition the whole passage stands thus;

———— Promissas Isidis undas ;  
Ipsos *illa* licet fœcundo flumine lucos  
Pieridum ——————  
Irriget.

### ACT I. SCENE II.

*Antonius.]* “The old copy generally reads Antonio, Octavio, Flavio. The players were more accustomed to Italian than Roman terminations.” *SEEEVENS.* The players may be pardoned for calling Antonius, Antonio, when he is called by the gravest poets and historians Mark Anthony.

*Eternal devil.]* “I should think our author rather wrote infernal devil.” — *JOHNSON.* “I would continue to read eternal devil. ‘L. J. Brutus,’ says Cassius, ‘would as soon have submitted to the perpetual dominion of a dæmon as

to the lasting government of a king."—STEEVENS.  
I agree with Steevens.

*No true man.] "No honest man."*—MALONE.  
This difficult passage has been explained at some length before.

*If I were Brutus, now, and he were Cassius,  
He should not humour me.] "This is a reflection on Brutus's ingratitude, which concludes, as is usual on such occasions, on his own better condition. 'If I were Brutus,' says he, 'and Brutus Cassius, he should not cajole me as I do him.'—WARBURTON. 'The meaning, I think, is this: 'Cæsar loves Brutus; but if Brutus and I were to change places, his love should not humour me;' should not take hold of my affection so as to make me forget my principles."—JOHNSON.*  
Warburton's notion, here, seems the just one: from what Cassius says immediately before, he shews he plumes himself, not for having persuaded Brutus to do a meritorious act, but for having seduced him to do a vicious one. The poet is clearly a partisan of Cæsar's throughout the play.

## ACT I. SCENE III.

*Why old men, fools, and children, calculate.]*

Calculate, here, as is justly observed by Johnson and Warburton, alludes to prophecy, and who so likely to listen to prophecies as children, fools, and the ‘superstitious eld.’ Blackstone, supposing this not applicable to age in general, proposes to point it thus: *Why old men fools, (i. e. old men who are fools) and children, &c.;* and this absurd pointing is admitted into the text of this edition.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Orchards.]* ‘The number of treatises on horticulture, even in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, very strongly controvert Mr. Malone’s supposition relative to the unfrequency of gardens at so early a period.’—STEEVENS. If the editor thought it right to insert this note, he should also have inserted the note it is intended to controvert.

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*Death, a necessary end,*

*Will come when it will come.]* “This is a sentence derived from the stoical doctrine of predestination, and is therefore improper in the mouth of Cæsar.”

—JOHNSON. There is no reading such silly pedantry as this with patience. Shakespear thought no more of stoicism here, than King William did, when he used to say every ball had its billet. The next note is equal to it. “The ancients did not place courage but wisdom in the heart.”—JOHNSON. Let us hear what Virgil says,

‘*Lectos Juvenes fortissima corda*

‘*Defer in Italiam.*—

‘*Quid gravidem bellis urbem et corda aspera tentas,*’

‘*Teucrum mirantur inertia corda.*’

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*Doth not Brutus bootless kneel.]* “I would read, ‘Do not Brutus, &c.’”—JOHNSON. I would not, for the reasons given in the note of Steevens.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*Even by the rule of that philosophy, &c.]* The contradiction of Brutus in this and the following speech has occasioned a controversy between the critics too long for insertion here, but it is well accounted for both by Mr. Mason and Mr. Ritson.

There are fewer notes on this play than on any I have yet examined.

## ANTHONY & CLEOPATRA.

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### ACT I. SCENE II.

*Quick winds.]* The labours of the commentators, and they have not been sparing of them here, throw no light on this passage. The following observation, however, of Steevens, on one of his colleagues, considering some of his own notes, is curious. “Mr. Henley is not apt to suspect there is any thing which, at a single glance, he does not perfectly understand; and therefore his remarks are ushered in with as little diffidence as can possibly be expected.”

*And get her love to part.]* “I have no doubt we should read *leave* instead of *love*. So afterwards—

“Would she had never given you *leave* to come.”—M. MASON.

“The old reading may mean, ‘and prevail on

her love to consent to our separation."—STEVENS. The alteration is also confirmed by MALONE. When hardly any sense can be brought, with the utmost refinement of conjecture, from the word as it is, and when a very easy and obvious one is produced by so slight a change, no one surely who is acquainted with the inaccuracy even of the best printing, need hesitate at inserting it in the text.

### ACT I. SCENE III.

*A race of heaven.]* Warburton and Johnson consider this as meaning a taste or flavour of heaven, as we say, the race of wine; but I am inclined to think with Malone, that it may mean of heavenly origin.

*Can Fulvia die?)* "That Fulvia was mortal, Cleopatra could have no reason to doubt; the meaning of the question, therefore, seems to be, 'Will there ever be an end to your excuses? As often as you want to leave me, will not some Fulvia, some new excuse be found for your departure?' She has already said, that though age

could not exempt her from follies, at least it frees her from a childish belief in all he says.”—STEEVENS. “I am inclined to think Cleopatra means no more than this: ‘Is it possible that Fulvia should die? I will not believe it.’”—RITSON. “Though age has not exempted me from folly, I am not so childish as to have apprehensions from a rival that is no more: and is Fulvia dead, indeed?” Such, I think, is the meaning.”—MALONE. Mr. Ritson gives the clear plain meaning of the question; Steevens’s note is too far-fetched, but ingenious; Malone is, to me, unintelligible.

*Oh my, oblivion.]* Of all the ingenious observations on this passage, I shall only cite that of Mr. HENLEY, on oh me! being suggested as the proper reading by STEEVENS. “Perhaps nothing more is necessary here than a change of punctuation. Oh my! being an exclamation frequently in use in the West of England.” Here we have, as usual, a vulgarism confined to the West of England, which is as much in use in Middlesex as it is in Cornwall; and which it is very unlikely Shakespear should put into the mouth of Cleopatra.

## ACT I. SCENE IV.

*One great competitor.]* “Perhaps, ‘Our great competitor.’”—JOHNSON. “Johnson is certainly right in his conjecture that we ought to read ‘Our great competitor,’ as this speech is addressed to Lepidus, his partner in the empire. Competitor means here, as it does whenever the word occurs in Shakspear, associate or partner.”—M. MASON. After inserting these unanswered and unanswerable reasons in favor of the alteration, how could the editor retain *one* in the text?

*Which they ear.]* “To ear is to plow, a common metaphor.”—JOHNSON. “To ear is not, however, at this time, a common word.”—STEEVENS. The question is, was it so in Shakespeare’s time?

*Termagant steed.]* In all the old copies *armagant*. On this word the conjectures are numerous; but as *termagant*, proposed by M. Mason and adopted by Steevens, seems no very appropriate epithet to a horse, it is, I think, too bold in the editor to admit it into the text,

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*Your considerate stone.]* This is surely wrong, and Johnson's proposed change to *you considerate ones* is very satisfactory, and certainly better deserves the adoption of the editor than the last. Blackstone proposes, without changing a letter, *considatest one*, but I cannot think with him that such a superlative may be pardoned, even in the mouth of Enobarbus.

*Other women*

*Cloy the appetites they feed; but she makes hungry*

*Where most she satisfies.]* On this Steevens observes, that the majority of ladies who have most successfully enslaved the hearts of princes have been less remarkable for personal than mental qualifications. The observation is strictly just; but why confine it to princes? Every day's observation will shew us that those women who most strongly attach men are not remarkable for beauty; but the attachments of princes do not fall under our every day's observation.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*In-hooped at odds.]* Dr. Johnson proposes in whooped at odds ; but I think that the following note of Dr. Farmer decisive in favour of the old reading—Shakespear gives us the practice of his own time, and there is no occasion for *in whoop'd at*, or any other alteration. John Davis begins one of his epigrams on proverbs :—

“ He sets his cock on the hoop, *in you* will say,  
For cocking in hoops is now all the play.”

To be *cock-a-hoop* is a proverbial saying not now quite out of use ; it is used in the burlesque opera of Midas—

“ To every fop  
They're *cock-a-hoop*.”

## ACT II. SCENE V.

*Ram thou thy fruitfull tidings in my ears.]*  
“ *Ram* is a vulgar word, never used in our author's plays but once by Falstaff, where he describes his situation in the buck-basket ; in the passage before us, it is evidently a misprint for

rain. *The quotation from Julius Cæsar does not support the old reading at all, the idea being perfectly distinct.*"—RITSON. There is, I think, little doubt of Mr. Ritson being in the right. The latter part relates to a note which is not in this edition, and therefore should have been omitted.

*Submerged.]* "Submerged is whelmed under water."—STEEVENS. For what description of readers does Mr. Steevens write his notes? I doubt if those who do not understand *submerge* will not be a little puzzled at *whelm*.

*The color of her hair.]* "This is one of Shakespeare's masterly touches; Cleopatra, after bidding Charmian to enquire of the messenger concerning beauty, age, and temperament of Octavia, adds, 'Let him not leave out the color of her hair,' as from thence she might be able to judge for herself of her rival's propensity to those pleasures upon which her passion for Anthony was founded."—HENLEY. I am at a loss which to admire most, the ingenuity or the decency of this note.

## ACT II. SCENE VII.

*Strike the vessels, Ho!] This Dr. Johnson supposes to mean sounding the casks to find if they are empty. Steevens to mean chinking the glasses; and Holt White sounding the kettle-drums. The last is the most natural, as it is (from the interjection ho!) clearly spoken loudly to some persons not on the stage. But I think Dr. Johnson helps us to a better sense in his Dictionary, where he gives, as one of the explanations of *strike*, “*To pay homage, as by lowering the sail.*”*

## ACT III. SCENE II.

*The elements be kind to thee.] “This is obscure; it seems to mean, May the different elements of the body, or principles of life, maintain such a proportion and harmony as may keep you cheerful.”—JOHNSON. “The elements be kind, &c. I believe means only, May the four elements of which this world is composed unite their influences to make thee cheerful.”—STEEVENS. “Dr.*

Johnson's explanation of this passage is too profound to be just. Octavia was about to make a long journey, both by land and by water; her brother wishes that both these elements may prove kind to her: and this is all."—M. MASON. Of the absurdity both of Johnson and Steevens there can be no doubt; but I cannot think Mr. Mason happy in his explanation. Let us hear a more reasonable critic. "Surely this expression means no more than, *I wish you a good voyage.*"—HOLT WHITE. It can only relate to the sea voyage, for there only is the state of the elements a subject of serious concern; the seamen alone experiences the combined force of all the elements.—

*Una Eurus Notusque ruunt, crebreque procellis  
Africus, et vastos volvunt ad litora fluctus,  
Intonuere poli et crebris micat ignibus æther.*

### ACT II. SCENE III.

*She is low voiced.]* “The quality of the voice is referred to as a criterion, similar to that already noticed of the hair.”—HENLEY. Exactly! and my admiration of the critic’s note there will apply equally to this.

*Harried him.]* “To harry is literally to hunt; hence the word harrier.”—HENLEY. It is never too late to learn. I have been a sportsman all my life, and yet never knew that fox-hounds were harriers; Dr. Johnson, however, though he was no sportsman, was as ignorant as myself; for he says, in his Dictionary, “ Harrier, (so he spells the word) from hare, a dog for hunting hares.”

### ACT III. SCENE IV.

*Or did it from his teeth.]* “Whether this means, as we now say, in spite of his teeth, or that he spoke through his teeth so as to be purposely indistinct, I am unable to determine.”—STEEVENS. Surely there is no difficulty here; the meaning is *to appearance only*, not *seriously*. I presume Steevens was too deep an antiquary to consult so modern a writer as Dryden, or he might have found in his *Wild Gallant*, ‘I am confident she is only angry from the teeth outwards.’

### ACT III. SCENE XI.

*One that looks on feeders.]* “One that waits at the table while others are eating.”—JOHNSON.

"A feeder or an eater was anciently the term of reproach for a servant."—STEEVENS. "I incline to think Dr. Johnson's interpretation of this passage the true one."—MALONE. I think Malone and Dr. Johnson right. I do not see how it can be a reproach to look on servants.

#### ACT IV. SCENE II.

*Onion-eyed.]* "I have my eyes as full of tears as if they had been fretted by onions."—JOHNSON!!!

#### ACT IV. SCENE III.

*Doff.]* "To do off, to put off."—STEEVENS. This is the third time this common vulgarism has been already explained, and we meet with it again in Hamlet.

#### ACT IV. SCENE X.

*That spaniel'd me at heels.]* I must think spaniel'd a very happy substitution for pannel'd, though I do not think it is happily illustrated by Mr. Tollet's observation, that to *dog* at the heels is not an uncommon expression in Shakespear,

since that means to follow, as a hound does his game, by the scent, while to spaniel, here, is to follow fawningly, as a spaniel does his master.

## ACT IV. SCENE XII.

*And false play'd my glory*

*Unto an enemy's triumph.]* This is very whist-like, indeed. If Hoyle were to turn commentator, he would have proposed a various reading—*into* for *unto*.

## ACT IV. SCENE XIII.

*Here's sport, indeed.]* “ I suppose the meaning of these strange words is, *here's* trifling, you do not work in earnest.”—JOHNSON. “ Perhaps rather, ‘ here's a curious game, the last we shall ever play with Anthony;’ or, perhaps, she is thinking of fishing with a line, a diversion of which we have been already told she was fond. Shakspear has introduced ludicrous ideas with as much incongruity in other places.”—MALONE. “ Cleopatra, perhaps, by this affected levity, this phrase, which has no determined signification, only wishes to inspire Anthony with cheerfulness,

and encourage those who were engaged in the melancholy task of drawing him up into the monument."—STEEVENS. The passage is so glaringly absurd and out of character, that it hardly merits so much investigation; but I think the conjecture of Steevens the best.

## ACT V. SCENE II.

*A room in the monument.]* "Our author here has attempted to exhibit at once the outside and the inside of a building. It would be impossible to represent this scene in any way on the stage, but by making Cleopatra and her attendants speak all their speeches, till the queen is seized, within the monument."—MALONE. This observation is very just. The same confusion of place occurs in the last scene of Romeo and Juliet, which represents, at the same time, both the inside and the outside of the monument. The duel between Romeo and Paris is in the church-yard; the death of Romeo, and the awakening of Juliet, must be within the monument, the inside of which could not be seen from the

church-yard, as on the entry of Friar Lawrence he only discovers a light in it, and, on a nearer approach, he discerns the blood of Paris on the stony entrance. This is obviated in the representation, by the alteration of Garrick ; for Juliet awakens and comes out of the tomb as Romeo is about to enter it.

# CYMBELINE.

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## ACT I.—SCENE V.

*Makes him.]* “ In the sense in which we say, this will *make* or *mar* you.”—JOHNSON. “ Makes him, in the text, means forms him.”—M. MASON. I think M. Mason clearly right.

*I was then a young traveller; rather shunned to go even with what I heard, than in my every action to be guided by other's experience.]* “ This is expressed with a kind of fantastic perplexity: He means, I was then willing to take for my direction the experience of others, more than such intelligence as I had gathered myself.”—JOHNSON. “ This passage cannot bear the meaning that Dr. Johnson contends for. Posthumus is describing a presumptuous young man, as he acknowledges himself to have been at that time,

and means to say, that *he rather studied to avoid conducting himself by the opinions of other people than to be guided by their experience.* To take for direction the opinion of others would be a proof of wisdom, not presumption," — M. MASON. Here Mr. M. Mason is obviously right; neither the propriety of the idea, nor the construction of the words, can have any other sense.

*Confound.]* "To confound, in our author's time, signified to destroy." — MALONE. So we have been told several times before.

## ACT I. SCENE VI.

*Your highness*

*Shall from this practice but make hard your heart.]* "There is in this passage nothing that much requires a note, yet I cannot forbear to push it forward into observation. The thought would probably have been more amplified, had our author lived to be shocked with such experiments as have been published in later times, by a race of men who have practiced tortures without pity, and related them without shame, and are

yet suffered to erect their heads among human beings." — JOHNSON. This excellent note is in every respect worthy of the pen that wrote it: the consequences of this love for cruel experiment are happily alluded to by a writer of equal humanity. " These philosophers consider men in their experiments, no more than they do mice in the air-pump, or in a recipient of mephetic gas." BURKE's *Letter to a Noble Lord*.

## ACT I. SCENE VII.

*This hand,*

*Whose every touch would force the feeler's soul  
To the oath of loyalty.]* " There is, I [think, here a reference to the manner in which the tenant performed homage to his lord." HOLT WHITE. We have then a quotation from Coke on Littleton, telling us how the homage was performed, and then the note concludes thus : " Unless this allusion be allowed, how has touching the hand the slightest connection with taking the oath of loyalty ?" Did Mr. White never hear of a loyal lover? the coloring is too warm in this

passage to have any allusion to the cold ceremony of doing homage to a feudal lord.

[*Let me my service tender on your lips.*] “Perhaps this is an allusion to the ancient custom of swearing servants into noble families.”—STEVENS. Yes, exactly as the last-cited passage alludes to feudal homage.

## ACT II. SCENE. II.

[*Our Tarquin.*] “The speaker is an Italian.”—JOHNSON !!!

## ACT II. SCENE V.

*And pray'd me oft forbearance. Did it with  
A pudency so rosy, the sweet view on't*

*Might well have warmed old Saturn.*] “It certainly carries with it a very elegant sense to suppose that the lady's denial was so modest and delicate as even to enflame his desires. But may we not read it thus :

‘ And pray'd me oft forbearance. Did it, &c.’

i. e. complied with his desires in the sweetest reserve, taking *did* in the acceptation in which it is

used by Jonson and Shakespear in many other places." — WHALLEY. This elegant display of Mr. Whalley's prurient fancy, Mr. Malone elucidates by the quotation of one of the grossest passages in Juvenal.

### ACT III. SCENE VI.

*I were best not call, I dare not call; yet famine,*  
&c.] "Mr. Pope was so little acquainted with the language of Shakespear's age, that instead of this, the original reading, he substituted, 'T'were best not call.' The alteration rather proceeded from Pope's correct ear for versification, than his ignorance of the language of the age of Shakespear.

### ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Jovial face.]* "Jovial face signifies, in this place, such a face as belongs to Jove." ---STEEVENS. As foot Mercurial, Martial thigh, and the brawn of Hercules, immediately precede, I think Mr. Steevens might have spared this piece of information.

## ACT IV. SCENE II.

*O Melancholy !*

*Who ever yet could sound thy bottom ! find  
The oose to shew what coast thy sluggish crare  
Might easliest harbor in.]* Mr. Seymour says,  
“*Crare*, which has caused so much controversy,  
I take to mean the person afflicted with melan-  
choly.” Why should the critic shew a wish to  
coin a new word, which, when coined, would  
make nonsense of the passage, after the proper  
meaning is established by Mr. Henley and Mr.  
Tyrwhit? *Crayer*, for a small vessel and at sea,  
occurs in two acts of James I. and one of Cha. II.  
and *craiera*, from which it is derived is in John-  
son’s Law Dictionary, and in the law Latin terms  
in Ainsworth. Warburton, who proposed to sub-  
stitute *carrack* for care, as it is in the folio, was  
right by guess. The true reading, Steevens says,  
was suggested by Mr. Simpson, in his notes on  
Beaumont and Fletcher; I wish the commentators  
had cited the place, that I might have turned to  
one good note of that gentleman on the joint poets.

## ACT IV. SCENE II.

*Who otherwise than noble nature did  
Hath altered this good picture.)* “ To do a picture; and a picture is well *done*, are standing phrases ; this question, therefore, is, ‘ Who has altered this picture, so as to make it otherwise than nature did it.’”—JOHNSON. “ Olivia, speaking of her own picture, asks Viola if it is not well done.—STEEVENS. “ Fecit was till lately the technical term universally annexed to pictures and engravings.”—HENLEY. Notwithstanding these notes, I cannot but think the word *did* is used here only as an auxiliary verb ; that the opposition is intended between a natural and violent death, and that the proper construction is, ‘ Who hath altered the picture otherwise than Nature did ?’

## ACT V. SCENE III.

*This is a lord.]* “ Read—‘ This a lord.’”—RITSON. Both the sense and the measure require this change.

## ACT V. SCENE IV.

*Mo more thou thunder, master, &c.]* “One would think that Shakespear’s style being too refined for his audiences, the managers had employed some playwright of the old school to regale them with a touch of ‘King Cymbyses’ vein ; the margin would be too honourable a place for so impertinent an interpolation.—RITSON. I entirely agree with Mr. Ritson : it should not have a more honorable place than the beautiful song of Collins, which is printed at the end of the play.

## ACT V. SCENE IV.

*Tho’ he have served a Roman.]* Here it is justly observed by Mr. Seymour, that “it should be, ‘*Tho’ he has* ; the particles, though and of, denoting sometimes the subjunctive mood, are often carelessly mistaken for the absolute sign of it.” This is a practice now very prevalent, but proceeds more from pedantry than carelessness.

## ACT V. SCENE V.

IMOGEN. *Why did you throw your wedded lady from you?*

*Think that you are upon a rock, and now Throw me again.*

POSTH. *Hang there like fruit, my soul, Till the tree die.]* “In this speech, or in the answer, there is little meaning. I suppose she would say, ‘Consider such another act as equally fatal to me with precipitation from a rock, and now let me see if you will repeat it.’”—JOHNSON. “Perhaps only a stage direction is wanting to clear this passage from obscurity. Imogen first upbraids her husband for the violent treatment she has just experienced; then, confident of the return of passion which she knew must succeed to the discovery of her innocence, the poet might have meant her to rush into his arms, and, while she clung about him fast, to dare him to throw her off a second time, lest that precipitation should prove as fatal to them both as if the place where they stood had been a rock. To which he replies,

‘ Hang there, i. e. round my neck, till the frame  
that now supports you shall decay.’ —STEEVENS.  
To me the only difficulty in explaining this whole  
passage arises from the utter impossibility of put-  
ting it in a clearer light than is done by the words  
of the poet. If it were necessary to give a stage  
direction for every action with which the poet  
requires the player to accompany his words,  
those directions would exceed in bulk these  
*variorum* notes. Imogen comes up to Posthu-  
mous as soon as she knows the error is cleared  
up, and, hanging fondly on him, says, not as up-  
braiding him, but with kindness and good humour,  
‘ How could you treat your wife thus,’ in that  
kind of endearing tone which most of my readers,  
who are husbands and fathers, will understand,  
who will add *poor* to wife. She then adds,  
now you know who I am, suppose we were on  
the edge of a precipice, and throw me from you ;  
meaning, in the same endearing irony, to say, I am  
sure it is as impossible for you to be intentionally  
unkind to me, as it is for you to kill me. Perhaps  
some very wise persons may smile at part of this

note ; but, however much black-letter books may be necessary to elucidate some parts of Shakespeare, there are others which require some acquaintance with those familiar pages of the book of Nature.

‘ Which learning may not understand,  
And wisdom may disdain to hear.’

Johnson’s concluding remark on the gross incongruity of names and manners in this play is just, but it was the common error of his age ; in *The Wife for a Month* of Beaumont and Fletcher, we have Frederick and Alphonso among a host of Greek names, not to mention thé firing a pistol by Demetrius Poliorcetes, in *The Humourous Lieutenant*.

## TITUS ANDRONICUS.

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As I can find no trace of Shakespear in this composition, I shall not make any remark on its commentators. I do not, however, blame the editor for inserting it, as he has in this the authority of all his predecessors to support him ; but if he chose to be singular, he surely would have done better to have omitted this than to have inserted *Pericles*. In both these plays there would have been ample room to notice absurd criticism ; but it is on absurd criticism on Shakespear only that I am employed.

# KING LEAR.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Now by Apollo.]* “ Bladud, Lear’s father, according Geoffrey of Monmout attempting to fly fell on the temple of Apollo, and was killed.”—  
MALONE. “ Are we to understand from this circumstance that the son swears by Apollo because his father broke his neck on the temple of that Deity ?”—STEEVENS. One really wonders how a man of Mr. Malone’s sense could have written so childish a note.

## ACT I. SCENE II.

*I would unstate myself.]* “ I take the meaning to be this—Do you frame the business who can act with less emotion. It would in me be a departure from the paternal character to be in a due resolution to be settled and composed on such

an occasion, the words would and should are in old language often confounded."—JOHNSON. "It seems to me that, 'I would unstate myself,' in this passage means simply, I would give my estate, including rank as well as fortune."—TYRWHIT. I think Tyrwhit evidently right. *Should* and *would*, *shall* and *will*, are confounded by all foreigners as well as by the Scots and Irish, but I do not recollect an instance of it in Shakespear.

## ACT IV. SCENE IV.

*To eat no fish.]* To Warburton's note on this passage, which is a very good one, it may be added that such was the dislike to fish after the reformation that the legislature were so apprehensive of the neglect of the fisheries and the scarcity of other food that an act of parliament was made to compel all persons to have fish at their tables on Wednesdays and Fridays, declaring, at the same time, that it did not arise from any superstitious motive. Fish is now so universally a favourite food, wherever it can be procured, that there is no cause to enforce this law, which is

yet unrepealed. This does not appear to have the case so lately even as the beginning of the eighteenth century; for in a little poem of King's called the Vestry, we find—

“ On Wednesdays only fast by parliament ;  
And Friday is a proper day for fish.”

At the table of the king's chaplains, which followed the custom of the old kitchen, fish was only served on Wednesdays and Fridays.

*Bo Peep.]* “ Little more of this game, except its mere denomination remains. It is mentioned, however, in Churchyard's Charity, 1593, in company with two other childish plays, which it is not my office to explain.—

“ Cold parts men play, much like old plain *bo peep*,  
Or Counterfeit, *in-dock-out-nettle* still.”—STEEVENS.

Of all the absurd notes on our poet, this is (and it is a bold word to say) facile princeps. Every nurse in the kingdom could have told Mr. Steevens how to play *bo peep*. And *In dock! out nettle!* are the mystic words that accompany the application of a dock leaf to the tetter occasioned by a stinging-nettle, in the Old Woman's Dispens-

sary. *Counterfeit* (obviously a verb like *play* in the first line), Steevens takes for another inexplicable game. If this note had been written like the Virgilius Restauratus of Martinus Scriblerus purposely to ridicule the foolish comments on Shakespear, it would be blamed for being too grossly absurd, even for avowed irony.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Capable.]* i. e. “Capable of succeeding to my land notwithstanding the legal bar of thy illegitimacy.”—STEEVENS !!!

## ACT II. SCENE IV.

*Tell it cry, sleep to death.]* “This, as it stands, appears to be a more nonsensical rhapsody. Perhaps we should read, ‘Death to sleep.’”—M. MASON. The construction is not very correct; but of the meaning I never had the least doubt; sleep till you die, wake no more; as we say bleed to death.

*Than she to scant her duty.]* Some of the critics have proposed to read *scan*, and Johnson

asserts that even *scant* may have the meaning of scan ; but as Steevens justly observes, *scant* means to be deficient or wanting in duty, the exact thing that is implied in the text.

## ACT III. SCENE IV.

LEAR. *Wil't break my heart ?*

KENT. *I'd rather break my own.]* “ I believe that Lear does not address this question to Kent but to his own bosom. Perhaps, therefore, we should point the passage thus :

“ *Wilt break, my heart ?*

“ The tenderness of Kent, indeed, induces him to reply as to an interrogation that seemed to reflect on his own humanity.”—STEEVENS. Taking the words of Lear by themselves, the sense and punctuation proposed by Steevens is very judicious, but is confuted by what Kent says, who must know how Lear spoke it ; and there seems no sort of reason why, as is suggested, he should affect to misunderstand him. Nothing is more natural than for a person absorbed in the contem-

plation of his own misery to answer offers of assistance that interrupt him, with petulance.

*Ha no nonny dolphin my boy, &c.]* On this passage, which would be totally unintelligible without it, Steevens has a very curious and entertaining note; he observes that Hey no nonny is the burthen of a ballad in the Two Noble Kinsmen, which produces the following note from Mr. Henley: “It is observeable that the two songs to which Mr. Steevens refers for the burthen of Hey no nonny are both sung by girls distracted from disappointed love.” In the note of Steevens no other song with the burthen of Hey no nonny is quoted than that in The Noble Kinsmen. It does occur in a song sung by Balthazar in *Much Ado about Nothing*. But Balthazar is not a girl mad for love, neither does he surely mean to advise the ladies who are forsaken by their lovers to run distracted when he advises them to convert their notes of woe to Hey nonny nonny.

*Saint Swithin footed thrice the wold,  
He met the night-mare and her nine fold.]*  
“Wold is still used in the north of England, sig-

nifying a kind of down near the sea. A large tract of country in the East Riding of Yorkshire is called the *Woulds*."—COLMAN. In Leicestershire, Kent, and some other counties, large tracts of land are in like manner distinguished."—NICHOLS. Perhaps we may trace this, like many other such words, through all the counties in England; it is used for a large tract of country on the borders of Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire; and there is a town in Gloucester called Stow on the Wold. "Her nine fold seems to be put (for the sake of the rhyme) instead of nine foals."—TYRWHIT. "Lest the reader should suppose the compound night *mare* has any reference to horse-flesh, it may be observed that *mara* in Saxon signifies an Incubus."—STEEVENS. I believe, with Mr. Tyrwhit, that Shakespear, like these ignorant readers, did suppose that night-mare had some reference to horse-flesh.

[*Tything to Tything.*] Mr. Steevens here shows his knowledge of the law, and quotes in form, Stat. 39, Eliz. ch. 4. to explain this very *difficult passage*! ! !

## ACT III. SCENE VI.

*Nero is an angler in the Lake of Darkness.]* “Nero is introduced in the present play above eight hundred years before he was born.”—MALONE. Shakespear is guilty enough of anachronisms, but to censure him for this, savours a little of Cardanus Rider, who tells us London was built, 2856 A. C. York, 2737, and Roine, 2501. See Rider’s Almanac, A. D. 1749. I find he has since altered this chronology depositing York from its priority to Rome, but still maintaining that of London,

*Brache.]* This word, like *vice* and *sir*, when applied to the clergy, is a never failing source of learned conjecture whenever it occurs.

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Looks fearfully in the confined deep.]* “Mr. Rowe, and all the subsequent editors for *in read on*, I see no need of change; Shakespear considered the sea as a mirror. To look in a glass is yet our colloquial phraseology.”—MALONE. 1

must approve the change. Neither can I think, supposing Shakespear did consider the sea as a mirror, that he would represent it as looking at itself in it, (for so we colloquially use looking in a glass), but rather as looking tremendous when reflected in it.

#### ACT IV. SCENE II.

*I have been worth the whistle.]* “ This expression is a proverbial one. Heywood, in one of his dialogues, consisting entirely of proverbs, says, ‘ It is but a poor dog that is not worth the whistling.’ —STEEVENS. Was it necessary to cite Heywood to authenticate this very common proverb ?

#### ACT IV. SCENE III.

*As pearls from diamonds dropp'd.]* “ The harshness of the foregoing line in the speech of the gentleman induces me to believe that our author might have written ‘ Like pearls from diamonds dropping.’ The idea might have been taken from the ornaments of the ancient carcanet, or necklace, which frequently consisted of table-

diamonds, with pearls appended to them, or, in the jeweller's phrase, dropping from them. Pendants for the ears are still called drops."—STEVENS. This conjecture, as well as the proposed emendation, which restores the verse, is very happy.

## ACT IV. SCENE V.

*Let me unseal the letter, &c.]* "I know not well why Shakespear gives the steward, who is a mere factor of wickedness, so much fidelity. He now refuses the letter, and afterwards, when he is dying, thinks only how it may be safely delivered."—JOHNSON. Surely when Dr. Johnson made this note he did not recollect the character Edgar gives of this steward after he is dead:—

"As duteous to the vices of thy mistress  
As badness could require."

Fidelity in agents of wickedness is, I fear, not so uncommon as to be unfit for the general probability of dramatic manners.

## ACT IV. SCENE VI.

*Hangs one who gathers samphire.]* “This personage is not a mere creature of Shakespear’s imagination for the gathering of samphire was literally a *trade*, or common occupation in his time, it being carried and cried about the streets, and much used as a pickle.”—MALONE. And this is supported by the authority of Venner’s *via recta*, 4to, 1622. This practice of referring the most common things of the present day to the time of Shakespear is quite a mania in this otherwise very ingenious critic. I will venture to say at this moment in any of our towns on the south coast from Dover to Lymington, if a traveller orders pickles to his mutton steak, the odds are two to one in favour of samphire against cucumbers or walnuts. The same critic, in his notes on Dryden, observes that, in the 17th century, the largest room on the first floor in London used to be called the dining room. It certainly had no other name till within these thirty years in any house in London; and in ordinary lodging houses it retains

that name to the present moment, and the dining-room floor is the name usually given to the first floor. *Vide*, half the auction catalogues in the metropolis.

*To say ay and no to every thing I said. Ay and no too was no good divinity.]* Besides the inaccuracy of construction in this passage it does not appear how it could be flattery to dissent from, as well as to assent to, every thing he said. The following reading was suggested to me by an ingenuous friend, by only a change in the pointing and the omission of a single letter, “To say ay and no, to every thing I said ay and no to, was no good divinity.”

*Handy dandy.]* On this Mr. Malone has a long note, in which he cites Florio’s Italian Dictionary, Cole and Ainsworth’s Latin Dictionaries, and Dr. Johnson’s English Dictionary. It is a pity he should have omitted the authority of Martinus Scriblerus, who tells us handy dandy is mentioned by Plato, Aristotle, and Aristophanes,

## ACT IV. SCENE VII.

*Child changed father.]* “Changed to a child by his years and wrongs, or perhaps reduced to this condition by his children.”—STEEVENS. “Lear is become insane, and this is the change referred to. Insanity is not the property of second childhood, but dotage.”—HENLEY. “Changed by his children; a father whose jarring senses have been untuned by the monstrous ingratitude of his daughters. So care-crazed, for crazed by care; wave-worn, worn by waves; woe-wearied, wearied by woes.”—MALONE. Mr. Malone has seen the proper meaning of the passage, and expressed it with clearness and precision. Mr. Henley appears also to have seen the meaning, but is every thing but clear and precise. Steevens may say with Medea—

“——Video meliora, proboque,  
Deteriora sequor.”

• *To watch (poor perdu)*

*With this thin helm.]* With this thin covering of air.”—MALONE. This is certainly right; but

Warburton is also right in supposing it alludes to the *enfans perdus*, or forlorn hope, of an army; though he is wrong, as Steevens justly observes, in supposing those ordered on such service were lightly or badly armed; the contrary is clearly the fact, and to such a fact is the allusion of the poet. *Pour perdu*, you are exposed to the most dangerous situation, not with the proper arms, but with a mere helmet of air,

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*When I could not be honest  
I never yet was valiant; for this business  
It toucheth us as France invades our country,  
Not holds the king, with others whom I fear  
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.]*

Why Colman omitted these lines I cannot conceive, as they are a necessary justification of Albany's conduct, as is well observed by Warburton in his note. One of the greatest faults in Tates alteration of this play is, the want of a motive in so virtuous a character as Albany to resist the king, especially as he is declared to be at enmity with

Cornwall; but here a motive is given, which I hope will always actuate the bosom of every Englishman.

*Sir, you speak nobly.]* “This reply must be understood ironically.”—MALONE. Rather say, *hypocritically*.

## ACT V. SCENE II,

ALB. *The let alone lies not in your good will.*

EDM. *Nor in thine, Lord.*

ALB. *Half-blooded fellow! yes.]* “Whether he shall not or shall depends not on your choice.”—JOHNSON. “Albany means to tell his wife, that, however she might want the power, she evidently did not want the inclination to prevent the match.”—RITSON. “To obstruct their union lies not in your good pleasure. Your *veto* will avail nothing.”—MALONE. The sense suggested by Ritson would be plausible enough, if the first line stood singly; but the answer of Edmund, and the retort of Albany, completely establish the opinion of Johnson and Malone.

*Enter Edgar, armed.]* The spirit of this scene evaporates in the alterations of Tate and Colman, from Edgar being known immediately. The theatre was then afraid to hazard a warrior on the stage with his visor closed. It has, however, since been done, without any bad effect, in Mr. Lewis's Tragedy of Alfonso.

*And my poor fool is hanged.]* Notwithstanding the arguments of Sir Joshua Reynolds, I have no doubt in my mind but that Steevens and Malone are right in referring this to Cordelia. In Johnson's concluding note on this play and the change of the catastrophe, he gives this strong testimony in favor of the alteration:—"In the present case, the public has decided. Cordelia, from the time of Tate, has always retired with victory and felicity. And, if my sentiments could add any thing to the general suffrage, I might relate, I was many years ago so shocked by Cordelia's death, that I know not whether I ever endured to read the last scenes of the play, till I undertook to revise them as an editor." Here Steevens has a note, not on the poet, but on the critic. "Dr.

Johnson should rather have said, the managers of the Theatre Royal had decided, and the public has been obliged to acquiesce in their decision. The altered play has the upper gallery on its side, and the original drama was patronized by Addison.

‘*Victrix causa diis placuit sed victa Catoni.*’

This fool’s bolt was shot for the sake of the wretched pun drawn from the line of Lucan. Steevens puts the opinion of Johnson himself as nothing; perhaps some of his readers may think it equivalent, at least, with that of Addison. Johnson speaks from his own feelings here. Addison from a blind deference to the opinion of Aristotle, which he has mistaken. Let the Stagyrite speak for himself:—ΠΡΩΤΟΝ μὲν δῆλον ὅτι οὐτε τοὺς ἐπιεικεῖς ἀνδρας δεῖ μεταβάλλοντας φαίνεσαι εἰς ἐντυχίας εἰς δημοσιχίαν οὐ γὰρ φοβερὸν οὐδὲ ἐλεεινὸν τὸντο ἀλλὰ μιαρόν ἔσῃ.  
“In the first place, the change from prosperity to adversity should not be represented as happening to a virtuous character (i. e. eminently virtuous or good), for this raises *disgust*, rather than *pity* or *compassion*

is rendered, in a note, still more literally, by the same judicious critic : “ For this is neither *terrible* nor *piteous*, but shocking ;” and he illustrates this by what we feel on reading Clarissa, in which he is followed by the author of the Commentary on the Poetic ; surely Cordelia is as strong an example.

# ROMEO AND JULIET.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Is the day so young.]* i. e., “ Is it so early in the day.”—STEEVENS !!!

## ACT I. SCENE III.

*That book—*

*That in gold clasps locks in the golden story.]*  
“ The golden story is, perhaps, the Golden Legend, a book, in the dark ages of popery much read, and doubtless often exquisitely embellished, but of which Canus, one of the Popish doctors, proclaims the author to have been *homo ferrei oris plumbei cordis.*”—JOHNSON. “ The poet may mean nothing more than to say, that those books are most esteemed by the world, where valuable contents are embellished by as valuable binding.”  
STEEVENS. I am inclined to agree with the last critic.

## ACT I. SCENE IV.

*Measure.]* i. e. “Dance.”—MALONE. This unnecessary remark occurs here for about the twentieth time.

*Come, we burn daylight; ho!]* “To burn daylight is a proverbial expression, used when candles, &c. are lighted in the day time.”—STEEVENS !!!!!!!

*Fairies' midwife.]* Here Stevens has a very sensible note, proving that it does not mean midwife to the fairies, but the midwife employed by the fairies to deliver the fancies of sleeping men. Mr. T. Warton has a note after this, too long for insertion, and too absurd for confutation. Commenting on Shakespear has a strange faculty of exposing men of real and acknowledged genius.

## ACT II. SCENE IV.

*Top gallant.]* “The top-gallant is the highest extremity of the mast of a ship.”—SEEEVENS. Surely maritime terms are too common in Great Britain to need this explanation, which, by the

way, is not correctly given; for the top-gallant-mast has two extremities, one of which must be the whole length of that mast from the highest extremity.

### ACT III. SCENE I. -

*Amazed.]* “ Confounded.” — STEEVENS.  
Again ! ! !

*Affection makes him false.]* “ This charge of falsehood, though produced at hazard, is very just. The author who seems to intend the character of Benvolio as good, meant, perhaps, to shew how the best minds in a state of faction and discord are detorted to criminal partiality.” — JOHNSON. That Lady Capulet, who was irritated by the loss of a kinsman, should accuse Benvolio of partiality, is very natural, but that Johnson should do it is very extraordinary, since he relates every circumstance exactly as it passed before the eyes of the spectators.

### ACT III. SCENE V. .

*Dry sorrow drinks our blood.]* “ This is an allusion to the proverb, *sorrow is dry.*” — STEEVENS.

VENS. But, according to a prior note, this allusion could *now* be only understood in the midland counties. See a note on a passage in the *Tempest*, the second that is mentioned in these remarks.

*Renown'd for faith.]* "This Romeo, so renowned for faith, was but the day before dying for love of another woman: yet this is natural. Romeo was the darling object of Juliet's love, and Romeo was, of course, to have every excellence."—M. MASON: Women, I believe, are not apt to dislike their lovers for infidelity to other women; but, though they would be proud of the triumph, they would not be likely to say such lovers were generally renowned for faith, when the breach of that faith is a proof of the superiority of their own attractions. Romeo hardly made Juliet the confidante of his passion for Rosalind, and she was not likely to hear of it from any other quarter.

*How now, a conduit, girl.]* "Conduits, in the form of human figures, as has been already observed, were common in Shakespear's time."—MALONE. I believe they are not uncommon

now; but to suppose any such particular allusion here, converts a very natural metaphor into a very childish conceit.

#### ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Evening mass.]* “Juliet means vespers. There is no such thing as evening mass, which our author must necessarily have known, if, *as there is some reason to believe*, he had been bread a papist.”—RITSON. This is a strange note; it proves he *was not*, what it says there is some reason to believe he *was*. For, *there is some reason to believe*, read, *some persons have believed*.

#### ACT IV. SCENE II.

*We shall be short.]* “That is, we shall be defective.”—JOHNSON!!!!

#### ACT V. SCENE III.

*Engrossing.]* “Engrossing seems to be used here in its *clerical* sense.”—MALONE. Is clerical ever applied to any other clerks than those styled *κατ' εξοχην* the clergy? I perfectly agree with Mr. Seymour in the wish that this play had been ter-

minated happily, neither was there any occasion for the apothecary, as Mr. Seymour suggests, to imitate the friar, and give a harmless medicine instead of poison, to affect the change in the catastrophe ; it would have been quite sufficient for the friar to have arrived at the tomb a few minutes sooner. As for the further objection to the improbability of the prince upbraiding Romeo for his return from banishment, and the further affair of killing Paris, the last might be easily dispensed with, as quite unnecessary ; and there is certainly sufficient dramatic probability for a man of the prince's character to pardon the return of Romeo, when attended by a circumstance so much desired by him as the reconciliation of the two families.

# HAMLET.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Long live the King.]* “ This sentence appears to have been the watch word.”—STEEVENS. Not exactly so. The common challenge in France used to be *Qui vive?* and the answer *Vive le Roi*, just like the common challenge in the park, *Who goes there? A friend.*

*Ratified by law and heraldry.]* “ Mr. Upton says that Shakespear sometimes expresses one thing by two substantives, and that law and heraldry means by the herald law.”—STEEVENS. “ Puttenham, in his Art of Poesie, speaks of the *figure of twynnes, horses and barbs, for barbed horses, venom and darts, for venomous darts.*”—FARMER. i.e. “ To be well ratified by the rules of law and the forms prescribed *jure feciale*, such

as proclamations, &c."—MALONE. The sense of this passage is so obvious, that I should have marked Mr. Malone's note with my signs of admiration !!! had not the *wisdom* of his colleagues made it necessary.

### ACT I. SCENE II.

*Merely.]* "Absolutely, entirely."—STEEVENS. It is very true, but why repeat the information so often ?

*Hyperion.]* Steevens says the only instance he has met with among all the English poets where Hyperion has its proper quantity is in the old tragedy of *Fuimus Troes*, but it occurs in Aken-side's Hymn to the Naiads :

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When the might  
Of Hyperion, from his noon-tide throne, &c.

*Dearest foe.]* "Dearest for direst, most dreadful, most dangerous."—JOHNSON. "Dearest is most immediate, consequential, important."—MALONE. Malone is obviously right. So in Othello, *dearest action*, which Mr. Malone there also properly explains by *most important action*.

*I shall not look upon his like again.]* “Mr. Holt proposes to read, from an emendation of Sir Thomas Samwel, bart., of Upton, in Northamptonshire,

Eye shall not look upon his like again.

And thinks it more in the true spirit of Shakespear than the other.”—STEEVENS. I cannot agree with Mr. Holt in preferring the baronet’s emendation. To write naturally is the general characteristic of Shakespear, and if he is occasionally induced to write otherwise, do not let us mutilate the text to multiply the examples.

*Did you not speak to it.]* Mr. Steevens contends, and I think properly, for the emphasis being laid on *speak*, but were it laid on *you* it would not, as he contends, imply that Hamlet entertained the vulgar prejudice that a ghost would only answer a man of learning; but this would then be the force of the expression: I am not surprised that these ignorant soldiers should be afraid to speak to it, but I am that you who are more intelligent and more interested in the investigation of such an ex-

traordinary appearance, should not have had the curiosity to do it.

### ACT I. SCENE III.

*Hooks of steel.]* I have no doubt that this, and not *hoops* of steel, is the proper reading, though I do not think it derives any additional support from the following observation of Mr. Malone ; “ It may also be observed, that hooks are sometimes made of steel, but hoops never.” I believe hoops are at least as often made of steel as hearts are, or as foreheads are of brass.

*Are most select and generous chief in that.]* Chief here, as is suggested both by Steevens and Ritson, is clearly used adverbially. How Mr. Malone could give any sanction to the idea that chief here has any relation to heraldry, is really wonderful.

### ACT I. SCENE IV.

*East and west.]* Here Messrs. Edwards, Johnson, and Malone, combine their efforts to explain what no explanation can make clearer than it is.

*They clepe us drunkards.]* “ And well our Englishmen might, for in Queen Elizabeth’s time there was a Dane in London, of whom the following mention is made in a collection of characters, entitled *Looke to it, for I’ll stab you.*

You that will drink Reynaldo unto death,  
The Dane, that would carouse out of his boot. --STEEVENS.

Though this observation is confirmed by Reed and M. Mason, Iago tells us another story; according to him, ‘ your *Englishmen* will with *facity* drink your *Dane* dead drunk;’ therefore there was no great wonder in the triumph over poor Reynaldo and his boot.

*Dout.]* Something of this too much.

*I’ll call thee Hamlet, King; Father, Royal Dane; O answer me.]* It is thus pointed in all the editions I have ever seen of the play, but there is something so convincing to me in the change of punctuation proposed in the following anonymous observation, published in the St. James’s Chronicle, Oct. 15, 1761, that I shall, without hesitation, adopt it. “ This seems to be a strange climax (if not an anticlimax.) But a slight alteration in

the pointing will remove all objections, preserve the beauty of the climax, and perhaps give an additional force to the whole passage,

I'll call thee Hamlet  
King, Father,—Royal Dane O answer me !

The young prince, being impatient to know why the ghost appeared, first addresses him by his particular name Hamlet, then by his title of King, and lastly by the endearing appellation of Father, with which the climax naturally and beautifully ends. He then proceeds to address the ghost by a general appellation, ‘*Royal Dane, O answer me.*’ This seems the criticism of no mean critic. It must be remembered that the St. James’ Chronicle, when it first came out, received the assistance of Lloyd, Thornton, and Colman.

*Nemean.]* Why is there an accent here? It is meant to shew that the accent required by the verse is different from the quantity, but it is not so; Pindar’s Nemean Odes are stiled *Nemaea*, not *Nemaeæ*.

## ACT I. SCENE V.

*Orchard.]* “Orchard for garden.”--STEEVENS!!!

*Uneffectual fire.]* i. e. “ Shining without heat.” —WARBURTON. “ Uneffectual fire, I believe, rather means fire that is no longer seen when the light of morning approaches.”—STEEVENS. That Steevens should be wrong is not extraordinary, but that Warburton should be right is very extraordinary. Between the notes of Warburton and Steevens, we find this note, without any name, on the verb *to pale*. “ To pale is a verb used by Lady Elizabeth Carew in her tragedy of Mariam, 1613.” This is like citing Anna Comnena for the authority of a word in Homer.

*Rest, rest, perturbed spirit.]* I once saw an actor (I will not mention his name) lay his hand on his bosom as he spoke these words, applying them to himself. Mr. Steevens has a most excellent note here on the whole preceding scene.

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*All his bulk.]* “ All his body.”—MALONE !!!

*The rugged Pyrrhus.]* Mr. Seymour’s observations on this speech are in general just; and I agree with him that “ there can hardly be a serious doubt

that the praise bestowed on it by Hamlet himself is sincere;” but the reason he gives for this is erroneous, that “ he must be mad, not in craft, but reality, if he had deliberately selected, for the purpose of probing the king’s conscience, a composition that was nothing but contemptible bombast.” But the play from whence this speech is supposed to be taken, was not that which Hamlet selected to be played before the court.

## ACT II. SCENE II.

*In the full bent.]* “ The full bent is the utmost extremity of exertion. The allusion is to a bow bent as far as it will go.”—MALONE. I cannot conceive this word has any relation to archery, the technical terms of which were too well known in Shakespear’s time to be misapplied; to bend the bow is to *fasten* the string to the horns that it may be ready for *drawing*, and the more the bow was *bent* the less would its energy be when *drawn*. When we say we bend our thoughts to any particular subject, surely we have no allusion to archery. See Johnson’s Dictionary on *bend* and *bent*.

*Trail*] "The trail is the course of an animal pursued by the scent."—JOHNSON. Dr. Johnson, I suppose, would not have been very tenacious of his skill as a sportsman, but the trail is the course of a hare when she is not pursued, but going quietly from her feed to her seat.

*Three thousand crowns in annual fee.]* "Fee in this place signifies *reward, recompense*; the word is commonly used in Scotland for wages, as we say lawyer's fee, physician's fee."—STEEVENS. "Fee is defined by Minshew in his Dictionary 1617 a reward."—MALONE. "Mr. Ritson explains it, I think rightly, thus; The king gave his nephew a fewd or fee in land of that yearly value."—REED. That Mr. Ritson is right there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. Messrs. Steevens and Malone are weak here in their strong old black letter learning. Gold and fee are the old terms for money and land. See the Pepys Collection, or if you cannot, Dr. Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry, *passim*.

*Expostulate.]* The observations of Dr. Johnson on the character of Polonius, and M. Mason's

just and modest praises of them are equally honourable to them both.

*Satirical rogue.]* Though Warburton says the poet meant Juvenal by this, it was hardly worth the trouble of Dr. Farmer to write a long note to prove that Shakespear never read Juvenal in the original.

*In little.]* “In miniature.”—STEEVENS !!!

### ACT III. SCENE II.

*Dumb shews.]* It is rather odd, that in the observations on this, and the examples brought by Malone and Steevens, the dumb shew in this identical scene should not have been mentioned, neither is there any notice taken of it afterwards, though it is attended by a circumstance to me inexplicable, for as the murder is there circumstantially represented to the king, he ought to have been struck with it then, without waiting for the dialogue.

Segnus irritant animos demissa per aurem  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.

*Let those that play the clowns speak no more than is set down for them.]* “ Stowe informs us (page 697 edit. 1615) that among the twelve players who were sworn the queen’s servants in 1583, were two rare men, viz. Thomas Wilson for a quick, delicate, refined *extemporall witt*, and Richard Tarlton for a wonderous plentiful pleasant *extemporall witt*.”—STEEVENS. “ The clown very often addressed the audience in the middle of the play, and entered into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with such of the audience as chose to engage with him, It is to this absurd practice that Shakespear alludes. See the historical account of our old English Theatres, vol. ii.”—MALONE. There really is no reading this with common patience. These gentlemen have such a mania for the exhibition of their acquaintance with old English books, that they are eternally bringing it forward on every occasion, at the expense of common sense. Shakespear does not give a satire on the old English drama, but is censuring a custom of buffoon actors in general, which was common to Perketh-

man, to Ned Shuter, and is to every low strolling actor of the present day.

*You play'd once in the university.]* “It should seem, from the following passage in Vice Chancellor Hatchet’s letter to Lord Burghley, June 21, 1580, that the common players were occasionally permitted to perform there.”—FARMER. Here is another trial of patience; Dr. Farmer cites this letter of Vice Chancellor Hatchet to shew that *possibly* the common players were sometimes permitted to act at the universities, when it is a fact as certainly and clearly known that they actually did perform there, as any other that relates to the history of the theatre. Dryden wrote eight prologues and epilogues, to be spoken by the common players at Oxford; and in the *Guardian*, No. 95, there is a laughable account of the property waggon being robbed in its road to that university.

*Jigmaker.]* That Messrs. Steevens, Malone, and Ritson should think the very common word *jig* required a long and serious investigation is truly ridiculous. Mr. Malone has besides explained it before in the preceding act..

*Let the devil wear black for me, I'll have a suit of sables.]* Notwithstanding all the reasoning of the commentators on this passage, I think the poet meant to make Hamlet talk incoherently. Though Dr. Johnson tells us in a note that, “he supposes it is well enough known that the fur of sables is not black,” he, in his Dictionary, tells us that *sable* means black, and so it is used as a substantive in this play, where Horatio tells Hamlet the beard of his father was a *sable silvered*. In the passage quoted here by Dr. Farmer from *Massenger*,

“A cunning grief,  
That's only faced with sables for a shew,  
But gaudy hearts.”

Sables must clearly mean mourning.

*While the grass grows.]* “The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in Whitstone’s *Promos and Cassandra*.

While grass doth grow oft starves the seely steed.

Hamlet means to intimate that whilst he is waiting for the succession to the throne of Denmark, he may himself be taken off by death.”—MA-LONE. Mercy on us! here we have one of the

commonest proverbs in the English language explained, and the preservation of part of it in an old play as pompously announced, as if it had been one of the lost decades of Livy.

### ACT III. SCENE IV.

*Hyperion.]* It was hardly worth while to make the same remark on the quantity of this name twice in the same play.

*Enseamed bed.]* “Incestuous is the reading of the quarto 1611.”—STEEVENS. Surely, as this is the only reading that gives an obvious meaning, it might on such authority have been admitted into the text, but then indeed the sport of the commentator would have been spoiled, and Mr. Henley would have lost the opportunity of telling us, ‘that in the West of England the inside of a fat goose, when dissolved by the heat, is called its seam.’

*I must to England.]* As Mr. Malone justly observes, it does not appear how Hamlet knew the king’s intention. Most likely, Shakespear, as

he knew he intended to send him there, forgot he had not made it known to Hamlet.

#### ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Like some ore*

*Among a mineral of metals base.]* “Shakespear seems to think *ore* to be *or*, that is gold. Base metals have ore no less than precious.”—JOHNSON. “Shakespear uses the general word *ore* to express gold, because it was the most excellent of ores.”—STEEVENS!!! As if there was any doubt that by *ore* Shakespear could mean any thing except gold, adding the final *e* to give the proper sound to the word when anglicised, as most of the colors of heraldry are, as well as the other metal, *argent*.

#### ACT IV. SCENE V.

*To-morrow is St. Valentine.]* “There is a rural tradition that about this time of the year birds choose their mates.”—MALONE. After this curious account of a rural tradition, that birds pair early in the spring, we have a quotation from Browne’s *Antiquities of the Common People*, to

shew that it was the custom on St. Valentine's eve for persons to draw lots for their Valentines. Now if Mr. Malone was ever young himself, or ever now kept company with young people, or was not too wise to know common things, he must know that now, among all ranks of people, the first of the other sex that any person sees on St. Valentine's morning is called their Valentine, and to this the song clearly alludes. Besides this, though Mr. Malone has shewn that the practice of chusing Valentines arises from rural tradition of St. Valentine's day falling about pairing time, he still thinks it necessary to tell us that a certain Mr. Brand has employed himself without success to find something about it in the Legend of that saint. A less learned critic might have been contented with the authority of Shakespear himself, who has put these words into the mouth of Theseus :

Good morrow, friends : St. Valentine is pass'd—  
Begin these wood birds but to couple now ?

which Mr. Steevens, in a note on the passage (which might have sufficed without the long

note here) tells us, “ alludes to the old saying, that birds begin to couple on St. Valentine’s day.”

*When sorrows come they come not single spies,  
But in battalions.]* “ In Ray’s Proverbs we find ‘ misfortunes seldom come alone’ as a proverbial phrase.”—REED !!!!!!

*Brands the harlot  
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow  
Of my true mother.]* “ This seems to me an allusion to a proverb often introduced in the old comedies. Thus in the London Prodigal, 1605, ‘as true as the skin between any man’s brows.’”—STEEVENS. Surely honest Dogberry, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, is as good authority as the London Prodigal; he uses the expression, and Steevens, in a note on the place, tells us it is a proverbial expression.

*There’s rue for you.]* “ Rue anciently signified the same as *ruth*, sorrow.”—STEEVENS. This is a curious mode of explaining a word; as a verb, *to rue* is now by no means uncommon, but *ruth* is quite obsolete, though *ruthless* is still retained, but in verse only.

## ACT IV. SCENE VII.

*The scrimers of their nation  
He swore had neither motion, guard, nor eye,  
If you opposed them.]* “ This unfavourable description of the French swordsmen is not in the folio.”—STEEVENS. Now I should never have discovered that this was an unfavourable description of the French swordsmen; I should have rather thought the purport of the phrase to be that the French fencers, notwithstanding their acknowledged excellence, were foiled by the superior skill of Laertes.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*Make her grave straight.]* “ Make her grave from east to west, in a direct line, parallel to the church, not from north to south, athwart the regular line. This I think is meant.”—JOHNSON. “ I cannot think that this means any more than make her grave immediately. She is to be buried in Christian burial, and consequently the grave is to be made as usual.”—STEEVENS. That Stevens is right I think there can be no doubt.

*Confess thyself—]* “And be hanged, the clown I suppose would have said. This was a common proverbial expression. See Othello, Act IV. Scene I. He might, however, have intended to say *confess thyself an ass.*”—MALONE. Considering the context, the last suggestion seems to me the most probable.

*Sir in my heart there was a kind of fighting,  
That would not let me sleep.]* Steevens’s note on Malone’s observation on this passage is insolent and impudent, and he is, as usual, positive in the wrong ; there is not one word uttered by Rosen-craus and Guilderstern throughout the play that does not proclaim them to the most superficial observer as creatures of the king, purposely employed to betray Hamlet, their friend and fellow student : the brutal behaviour of Hamlet to Ophelia, noted in my last note on this play, may be perhaps accounted for from Shakespear thinking of the novel and the history by Saxo Grammaticus where I believe a young woman, from whom he took the idea of Ophelia, is employed to betray him.

*There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them how they will.]* Dr. Farmer informs me that these words are merely technical : a woolman, butcher, and dealer in skewers, lately observed to him that his nephew (an idle lad) could only assist him in making them, “ he could rough hew them,” (*Rough hew a skewer !!!*) “ but I was obliged to *shape their ends*. Whoever recollects the profession of Shakespear’s father, will admit that his son might be no stranger to such a term. I have frequently seen packages of wool pinned up with skewers.”—STEEVENS. That such a suggestion could be made by one man of sense, and adopted by another, can be only credible to those who are conversant with the commentators on Shakespear.

## ACT V. SCENE II.

*Bugs.]* “ A bug was no less a terrific being than a goblin. We call it at present a bugbear”—STEEVENS. Very true ; but why was the poor *bugaboo* defrauded of his niche in the temple of fame ?

*Or I could make a prologue, &c.]* “*Or*, in old English, signified *before*.”—MALONE. What does *Ere* signify in modern English?

*It did me yeoman's service.]* “The meaning, I believe, is, ‘this yeomanly qualification was a most useful servant or yeoman to me;’ i. e. did me eminent service.”—SEEVENS. Who ever heard or could suppose that writing a good hand was the particular qualification of a yeoman in the time of Shakespear. To do one knight's or yeoman's service is an expression by no means very uncommon at present, and is an allusion to the old feudal tenures.

I insert with great pleasure this very judicious observation of Mr. Seymour on the fatal conflict between Hamlet and Laertes. Instead of the clumsy and indistinct method by which the weapons are changed, for it generally escapes the most attentive eye, he proposes the mode which at once would be probable and obvious. “It is common,” he says, “in the exercise of the sword for one combatant to disarm the other, by throwing with a thrust and strong parry the foil out of his hand;

and Hamlet, having done this, might, agreeably with the urbanity of his nature, have presented his foil to Laertes, while he stooped to take up that of his adversary, and Laertes, who was only half a villain, could not have hesitated to accept the perilous accommodation, and indeed had not time allowed him to avoid it."

*Concluding notes.]* It is something singular, that neither in Mr. Steevens's just censure of the character of Hamlet, nor in Mr. Malone's best defence that could be made for what is indefensible, no notice is taken of the worst part of his conduct, his wanton and brutal insults to Ophelia, immediately after the celebrated soliloquy.

# OTHELLO.

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## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Owe.]* To owe is in ancient language to *own*, to possess."—STEEVENS. Very true; but do not explain it so often.

*Beast with two backs.]* Surely a divine, since a bishop, need not have selected this passage for a note.

## ACT I. SCENE II.

*The magnifico is much beloved,  
And hath in his effect a voice potential,*

*As double as the dakes.]* "The double voice of Brabantio refers to the option which (as being a Magnifico) he was no less entitled to than the duke himself, either of nullifying the marriage of his daughter, contracted without his consent, or of subjecting Othello to fine and imprisonment

for having seduced an heiress." — HENLEY.  
Surely the obvious purport of the passage is, that Brabantio, from his popularity, and wealth has effectually such a weight in the senate, as gives him a power equal to the double vote conferred by the constitution on the duke.

*As the sea's worth.]* "I would not marry her though she were as rich as the Adriatic, which the Doge annually marries." — JOHNSON. "As the gold ring thrown by the Doge into the Adriatic cannot be said to have much enriched it, I believe the common and obvious meaning is the true one." — STEEVENS. I think Steevens indubitably right, but nor for the reason he gives. I believe Johnson thought no more of the Adriatic being enriched by the annual wedding-ring, than Shakespear did of the Adriatic at all.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*In quarter.]* i. e. "On our station." — ANONYMOUS. This short note might have saved the long disquisitions of Ritson, Henley, and Malone, about the precise meaning of a word which, in the

military language of the present day at least, seems to have no very precise meaning ; but the meaning given in the note seems the leading signification, for the principal camp guard of a regiment is called the quarter guard ; but a regiment in quarters has no such guard. I wonder Mr. Steevens, who had been in the militia, did not exercise his judgement on this passage.

## ACT II. SCENE III.

*On the court and guard of safety.]* “ Thus the old copies. Mr. Malone reads, ‘*on the court of guard and safety.*’”—STEEVENS. Here follows a long note of Mr. Malone, justifying the change by reasons so irrefragable, that it is wonderful how any editor could print them at the bottom of the page and retain his *mumpsimus* in the text.

*Any lay.]* “ Any bet, any wager.”—RITSON.  
So in Henry VI. Part II.—

“ My soul and body on the action both,  
A dreadful lay, address thee instantly.”

*When this advice is free I give and honest.]*  
“ This counsel has an appearance of honest open-

ness of frank good will."---JOHNSON. "Rather gratis, not paid for, as his advice to Roderigo was."---HENLEY. Dr. Johnson I think nearly, but not entirely right. Iago means his counsel has not the appearance only of honest openness and frank good will, but was really such as honest openness and frank good will would give. Henley's notion is completely absurd.

*She's framed as fruitful*

*As the free elements.] Corresponding to benignus αφθονος."*—HENLEY. Corresponding with benigna αφθονη. *Sic corrigere meo periculo.*

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*Masters play here, I will content your pains,  
Something that's brief, and bid good-morrow  
general.]* Here Mr. Ritson has a note to tell us it was usual for the waits in the north of England after playing a tune or two to say, 'Good-morrow maister such a one, or good-morrow, dame ;' and adds that it should seem to have prevailed in Stratford upon Avon. This is a curious piece of information. I believe the same custom prevails at Christmas, now all over the kingdom. Per-

haps the lark in Milton's Allegro might have been as good an illustration.

*I never knew*

*A Florentine more kind and honest.]* “ In consequence of this line a doubt has been entertained concerning the country of Iago. Cassio was undoubtedly a Florentine, as appears by the first scene of the play, where he is expressly called one. That Iago was a Venitian is proved by a speech in the third scene of this act, and by what he says in the fifth act, after having stabbed Roderigo :—

‘ IAGO. Alas my dear friend and countryman, Roderigo !

GRA. What of Venice ?

IAGO. Yes.’

All that Cassio means to say in the passage before us is, ‘ I never experienced more honesty and kindness, even in one of my own countrymen, than in this man.’—MALONE. I cite this note as a complete specimen of what, in my opinion, a note on Shakespear should be. Here is a seeming inconsistency, clearly and satisfactorily explained away.

## ACT III. SCENE III.

*My lord shall never rest;*

*I'll watch him tame, &c.]* This strumpet-like resolution of Desdemona takes off much from the interest we should take in her fate. This is felt by the managers, who omit it in the representation. It is excellently observed by Mr. Penn, in his Notes on the Art of English Poetry, that the inverted commas in Bell's Theatre are a good study for all who wish to produce dramatic effect.

## ACT III. SCENE III.

*When I love thee not,*

*Chaos is come again.]* “When my love is for a moment suspended by suspicion, I have nothing in my mind but discord, tumult, perturbation, and confusion.”—JOHNSON. “There is another meaning possible—*When I cease to love thee the world is at an end.* i. e. there remains nothing valuable or important. The first explanation may be more elegant, the second is perhaps more easy.”—STEELE.

VENS. What can Steevens mean by saying, ‘the only meaning that can be deduced from the words is another possible meaning. Johnson’s elegant explanation is absurd in the extreme. Othello is shewn by the poet (and this passage is expressly written to shew it), incapable of suspicion till worked on by Iago ; neither was his love ever suspended by his suspicion ; if it had, instead of killing Desdemona, he would have let her down the wind to prey on fortune.

*I am glad I have found this napkin.]* “ It is remarkable that when she (Emilia) perceives Othello’s fury on the loss of this token, though she is represented as affectionate to her mistress, she never attempts to relieve her from her distress, which she might easily have done by demanding the handkerchief from her husband, or divulging the story.. She refused to restore it; but this would not have saved the plot.”—MA-  
LONE. This observation is very just ; it is particularly striking in the representation, neither is the concluding apology to be admitted, as there is no

reason why Emilia should be present when Othello demands the handkerchief.

*Owe.] "Own."*—JOHNSON. Again !!!!!

*Pioneers and all.] "That is the most abject and vile of the corps. Pioneers were generally degraded soldiers appointed to the office of pioneers as a punishment for misbehaviour."*—GROSS. When I recollect the information, the wit, and the other good qualities of my esteemed friend, Capt. Gross, I am sorry to see him brought into the office of a critic on Shakespear, merely to show he was capable of writing a military dictionary.

*Ear-piercing fife.]* On this there is a very long, but by no means unsatisfactory, note, written by T. Warton, shewing that the fife was anciently used in our armies, then discontinued, and restored again by the Duke of Cumberland, in the year 1747; but the fife of the age of Shakespear must have been different from that now in use, since it is called the *wry-necked fife* in the Merchant of Venice. See a note on that passage.

## ACT III. SCENE IV.

*But our new heraldry is hands not heads.]* That Warburton should have here found out an allusion to the order of baronets is not wonderful, for nothing absurd from his pen is wonderful ; but how could Judge Blackstone support him in it ? He *ought to have* known Shakespear could not have conceived so foolish an allusion. He *must* have known that he would not have been permitted to insult his monarch so grossly on the public stage.

*Charmer.]* Mr. Reed, in a long note on this word, quotes Deutronomy, ch. xvii. and Perkins's *Discourses of the damned Art of Witchcraft*, to shew that *charmer* meant an enchanter. Surely the psalms used in our Liturgy would have been a more familiar illustration.

*Rash.]* “Rash is *vehement, violent*.”—JOHNSON ! ! ! !

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Of so gentle a condition.]* i.e. “Of so sweet a disposition. So in King Henry V. ‘Our tongue

is rough, coz, and my condition is not smooth."—  
MALONE. Did this require illustration? Gentle is not a very difficult word to explain, and ill-conditioned is now used for ill-tempered.

*If that the earth could teem with women's tears,  
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.]*

On this plain passage both Johnson and Malone have chosen to display their learning; the former has quoted *Bacon*, to shew his opinion of equivocal generation, and the latter concludes his note with the following piece of interesting intelligence, which only shews the strong desire that possesses these critics to exhibit every thing they have read, on any occasion. "It appears from Bullokar, that a dead crocodile, but in perfect form, of about nine feet long, had been exhibited in London in our poet's time."

#### ACT V. SCENE II.

*Concluding observation on this scene.]* "I am glad I have ended my revisal of this dreadful scene. It is not to be endured." This does honor to the critic's feelings; in the representation it is disgustingly terrible.

*It is too late,*] “After this speech of Othello, the elder quarto adds an invocation from Desdemona, consisting only of the sacred name thrice repeated. As this must be supposed to have been uttered while she is yet struggling with death, I think an editor may be excused from inserting such a circumstance of supererogatory horror, especially as it is found but in one of the ancient copies.”—STEEVENS. To this is added, “that the alteration was probably made in consequence of the statute of 3d James I. chap. 21. which lays a penalty for the profane use of the sacred name in plays, &c.” and, as is suggested by Mr. Malone, by the authority of the Master of the Revels. The editors, as well as the Master of the Revels, are highly commendable for the omission. I wish the present licenser of the drama would enforce the prohibition. When Garrick brought Shakespear’s plays forth, he always substituted *heaven* for the sacred Name; but the players of the present day are so far from following his example, that they even introduce it where it is not in the original. Our modern

Anglo-German playwrights are lavish in the use of it.

*She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell.]*  
“There is nothing faulty in this passage, but it may be read

‘Gone to burn in hell.’—WHALLEY.

In the name of nonsense, why suggest an alteration in the same breath by which we are told none is wanted? On this principle, a change may be suggested in every sentence in every book that has been written.

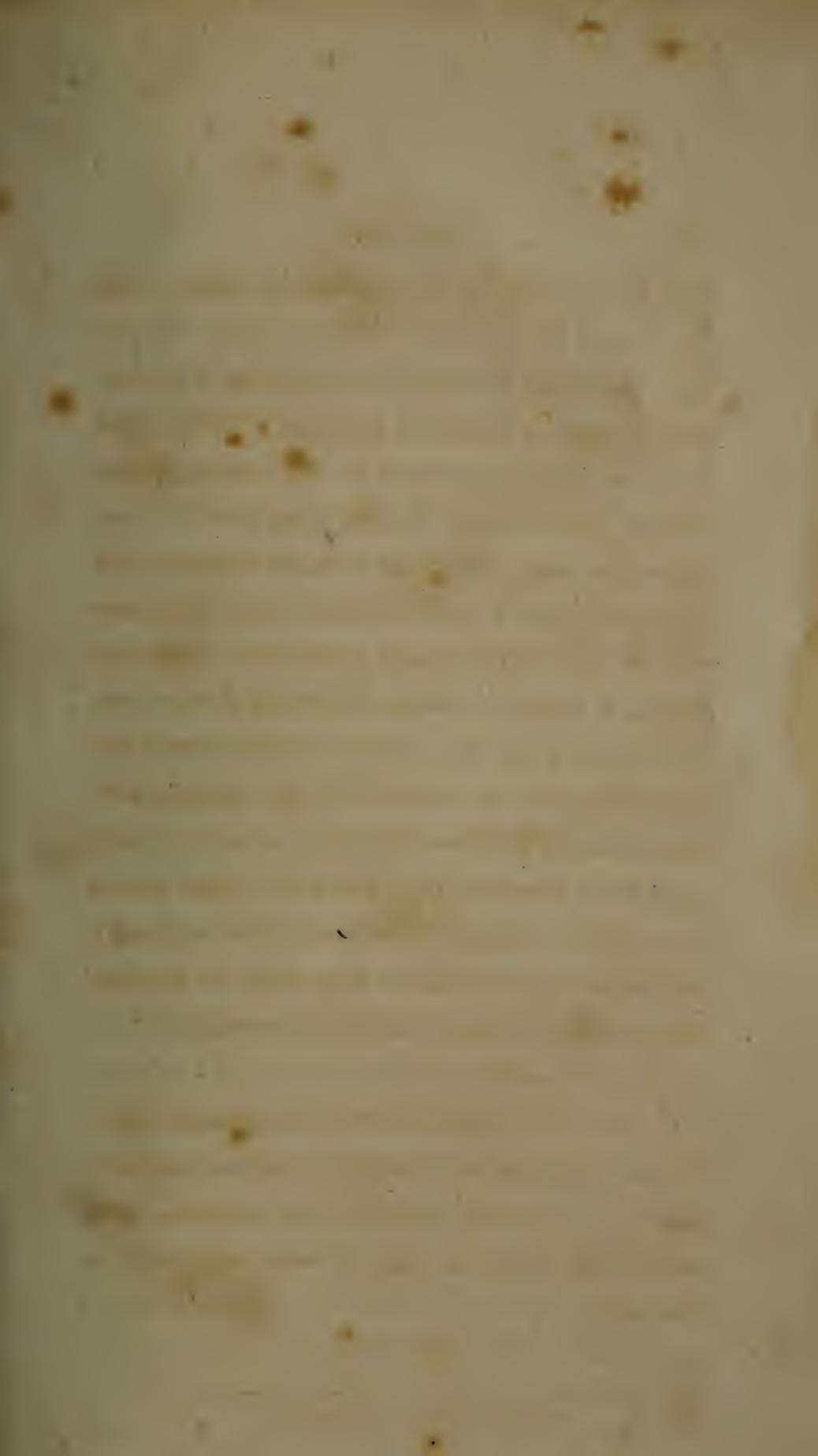
*A thousand times.]* On an expression of Emilia in the last scene of the third Act, ‘ ‘Tis not a year or two shews us a man,’ Dr. JOHNSON observes, “the time of the play is extended beyond what seems to be its length from the representation;” and here he says, “This is another passage which seems to suppose a longer space comprised in the action of the play than the scenes include.” Mr. M. MASON adds, “In confirmation of Johnson’s observation, that this and several other passages tend to prove, that a larger space of time is comprised in the action of this play than the scenes include, we may cite that in which Emilia says,

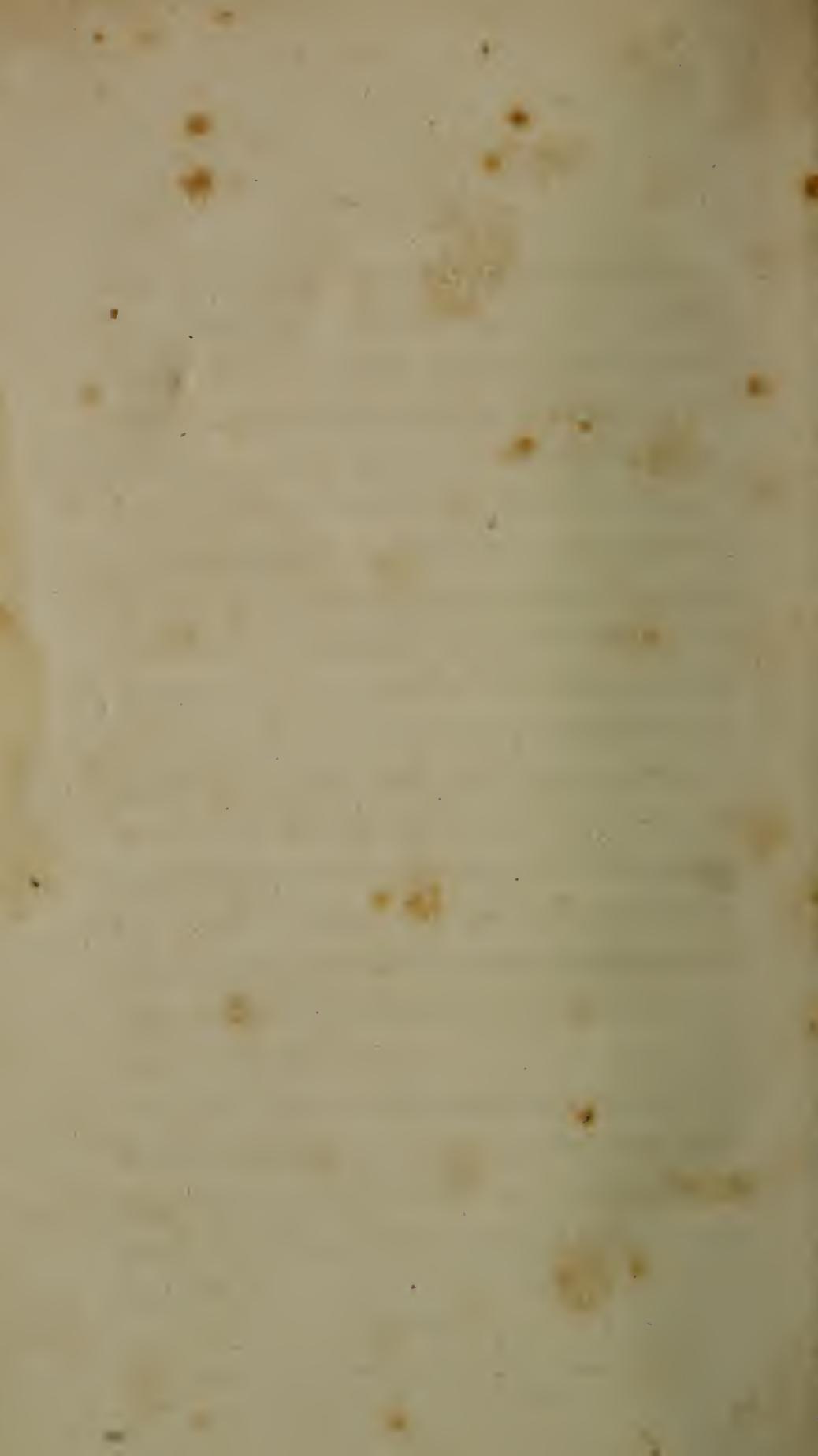
that her husband had an hundred times woo'd her to steal Desdemona's handkerchief." To defend Shakespear's breach of the unities is in vain, even that worst breach of the unity of time, when the time actually marked by the action is extended; which would be the case here if these objections were valid, but I think they are not. Emilia's saying, *it is not a year or two shews us a man*, may be well supposed to insinuate, how then should a month or two, or even a day or two. The *thousand* and the *hundred* are obviously hyperbolical, and are used every day by impatient men in common speech for *five* or *six*. Is any thing more common than when an eager person has rung his bell twice or three times, for him to tell his servant, that he has rung above an *hundred times*, without having his bell answered?

Oth. *O villain!*

CASSIO. *Most heathenish and most gross.]* Mr. Ritson suggests the change of *villainy* for *villian*. As it both restores the measure, and mends the sense, I wish it were admitted in the text.

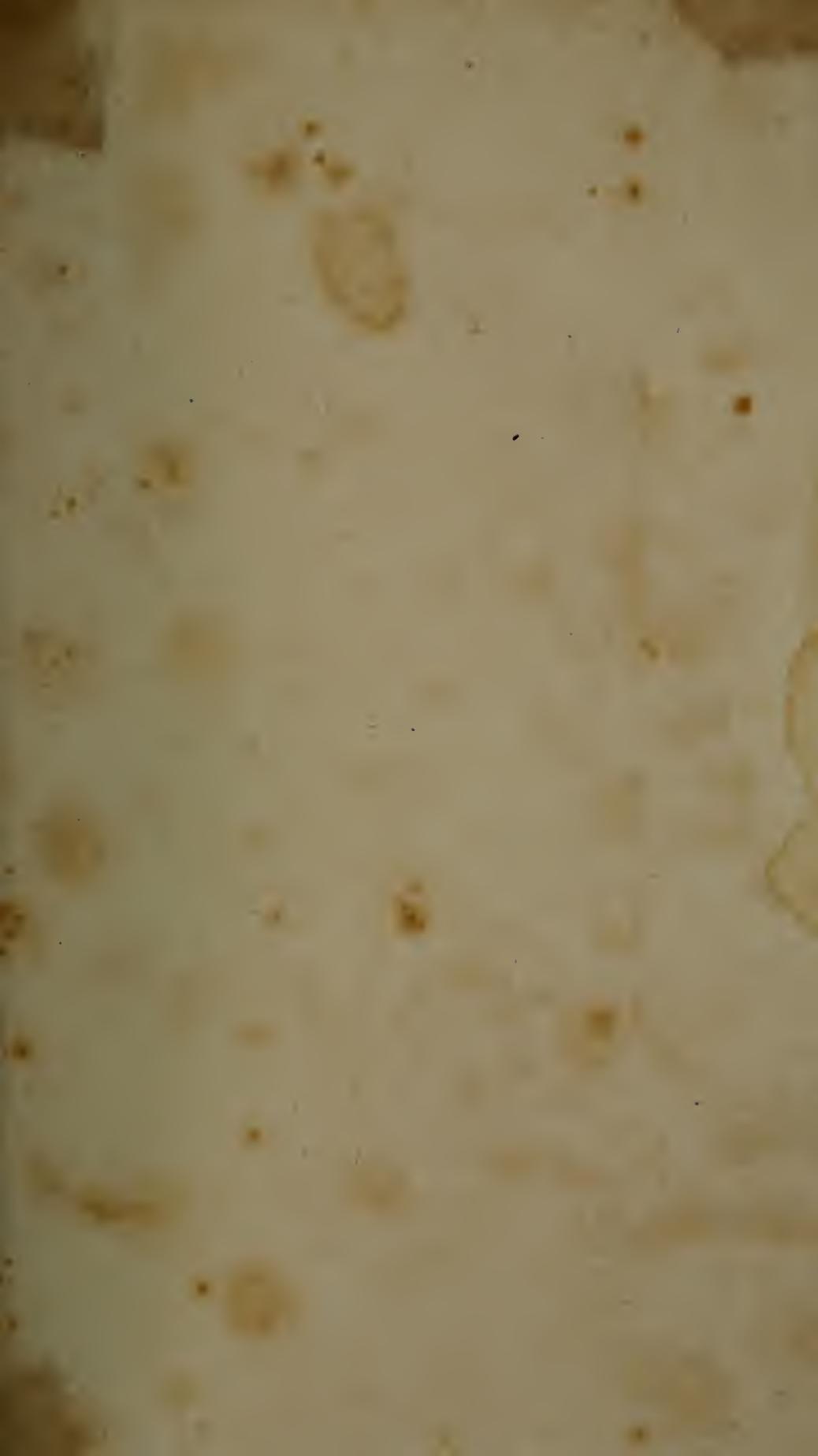
THE END.













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